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The Language of Roman Letters

Bilingual Epistolography from Cicero to Fronto

OLIVIA ELDER AND ALEX MULLEN

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THE LANGUAGE OF ROMAN LETTERS

Roman letters demonstrate that language has *imperium*: the power to resolve problems, to negotiate relationships and to construct identities. This book combines sociolinguistic and historical approaches to explore how that power is deployed by the bilingual elite of the Roman Republic and Empire, offering the first systematic analysis of Greek code-switches in the letters of Cicero, Pliny, Marcus Aurelius and Fronto and in the *Lives* of Suetonius. Greek was a subtle tool within Latin epistolary communication, and an analysis of letter writers' bilingual practices reveals their manipulation of language to manage relationships between peers and across hierarchical or political divides, uncovering the workings of politics and society. Comparative analysis of Roman and modern code-switching contributes to the debate on how bilingual strategies in letters evolve and how they relate to oral and literary language. The language of letters illuminates the Roman world and its entanglements with Greek language and culture.

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COVER IMAGE A section of drawings by Mai (1823) of the Milan palimpsest, containing the Acts of the Council of Chalcedon written over parts of the Frontonian correspondence. Reproduced by kind permission of the Warden and Fellows of All Souls College, Oxford.



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CONTENTS

<i>List of Tables</i>	page viii
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xi
<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	xiii
1 Language and Life in Letters	I
2 A Roman Conversation? Code-Switching in Diachronic Context	40
3 Republic of Letters: The Politics of Cicero's Epistolary Code-Switching	111
4 Imperial Relations: Greek and the <i>lingua</i> <i>Romana</i> of Fronto and Friends	175
5 The Language of Letters and Beyond: Greek in Suetonius' Biographies	220
6 Weaving Together the Threads: Epistolary Connections	271
<i>Appendix: Functions of the Code-Switches</i>	291
<i>Bibliography</i>	309
<i>Index</i>	325

TABLES

1	Information included in the database	<i>page</i> 20
2	Functions of code-switches	25
3	Examples of intra-sentential, non-literary-quotational code-switches above the level of the single word in Pliny's correspondence	45
4	Instances of parts of speech in the intra-sentential, non-literary-quotational code-switches in selected sources	48
5	Jackson's figures for parts of speech in the single-word, non-quotational Ciceronian code-switches in <i>Ad Atticum</i>	51
6	Instances of parts of speech in the intra-sentential code-switches of Callahan's corpus of US fictional prose (1970–2000) containing Spanish–English code-switching (based on Callahan 2004: table 3.1)	55
7	Number of examples of inter- or intra-sentential switching by author in Pliny's correspondence	62
8	Examples of Greek code-switches in Latin ablative contexts in the intra-sentential, non-literary-quotational code-switches in the <i>Ad Familiares</i>	68
9	Examples of Greek code-switches in Latin ablative contexts in the intra-sentential, non-literary-quotational code-switches in Fronto's correspondence	70
10	Grouped functions of code-switches by corpus	83
11	The most frequently attested functions of code-switching (above 15 per cent) and their percentages across all authors	85

List of Tables

12	Tabulation of results of Callahan's functional analysis of Spanish–English code-switches in her corpus of US fictional prose (1970–2000) (based on Callahan 2004: table 3.2)	86
13	Tabulation of results of Montes-Alcalá's functional analysis of Spanish–English code-switches in her corpus of Chicano, Cuban American and Nuyorican drama, fiction and poetry (based on percentages provided in Montes-Alcalá 2015)	88
14	Tabulation of functions of code-switching employed in recent analyses of modern written code-switching	90
15	Numbers of examples in the subcategories of the function 'Greek cultural sphere' (GCS) across all authors	92
16	Sources of literary quotations for code-switches across the authors. Partial, adapted and uncertain examples have been grouped with the likely source	95
17	Five most frequently attested functions of code-switching, and their percentages, in <i>Ad Atticum</i> , <i>Ad Familiares</i> and <i>Ad Quintum fratrem</i>	133
18	Frequency of code-switching in <i>Ad Atticum</i> by date	137
19	Number of code-switches by author in the Frontonian correspondence	193
20	Average number of code-switches per Loeb Latin page for the collections of letters in the database	194
21	Number of examples of inter- or intra-sentential switching by author in Fronto's correspondence	195
22	Functions of code-switches in <i>Ad Atticum</i>	291
23	Functions of code-switches in <i>Ad Familiares</i>	294
24	Functions of code-switches in <i>Ad Quintum fratrem</i>	295

List of Tables

25	Functions of code-switching in letters written by authors other than Cicero	296
26	Distribution by author of functions of code-switches in letters written by authors other than Cicero	297
27	Functions of code-switches in Pliny's correspondence	298
28	Functions of code-switches in Fronto's correspondence	299
29	Functions of code-switches in Suetonius' corpus	301
30	Functions of epistolary code-switches in Suetonius' corpus	302
31	Functions of code-switching in Suetonius across different sources.	303
32	Code-switches involving Fronto in <i>ex Auli Gellii Noctibus Atticis</i>	305

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ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviations of ancient sources follow the practice of the *Oxford Latin Dictionary* (*OLD*).

CIL = T. Mommsen (ed.) (1862–), *Corpus inscriptionum
latinarum* (Berlin)

EL = Embedded Language

GCS = Greek cultural sphere

LSJ = H. G. Liddell, R. Scott and H. S. Jones (1996), *A
Greek-English Lexicon, with a Revised Supplement* (Oxford)

ML = Matrix Language

MLF = Matrix Language Framework

OCT = Oxford Classical Texts

OLD = P. G. W. Glare (ed.) (2012), *Oxford Latin Dictionary*
(Oxford) (2nd ed.) 2 vols

TLG = *Thesaurus linguae graecae*

TLL = *Thesaurus linguae latinae*

VdH = M. P. J. van den Hout (1988), *M. Cornelius
Fronto: epistulae* (Leipzig)

CHAPTER I

LANGUAGE AND LIFE IN LETTERS

Epistolographic Characters and Sociolinguists

In an awkward letter to Atticus (*Att.* 1.1), Cicero has to defend his decision not to speak against one of his own clients, Caninius Satyrus, who has allegedly defrauded Atticus' uncle, Caecilius. Cicero has clearly upset Caecilius, who is advocating action, and needs Atticus on side to smooth things over. Cicero explains that he told Caecilius he did not want to hurt Satyrus or, more importantly, his powerful patron Lucius Domitius, and that he denied Caecilius' request for reasons of *humanitas* and because the group of creditors is powerful enough without him anyway. Cicero worries, however, that Atticus will come to another assessment:

quod si uoles in me esse durior, ambitionem putabis mihi obstitisse. ego autem arbitror, etiam si id sit, mihi ignoscendum esse, 'ἐπεὶ οὐχ ἱερήιον οὐδὲ βοεῖην.' uides enim in quo cursu simus et quam omnis gratias non modo retinendas uerum etiam acquirendas putemus. spero tibi me causam probasse, cupio quidem certe.
Att. 1.1.4

If however you want to take a harsher view of me, you will consider that my candidature got in the way. But I think that, even if that were the case, I should be forgiven, 'for it was not for beast of sacrifice or for bull's hide ...'. For you know the race I am in and how I think not only must all favours be kept but new ones sought. I hope you now approve of my reasons – I certainly want you to.¹

In this letter the quotation from *Iliad* 22.159–61 only makes sense if the reader completes it himself:

ἐπεὶ οὐχ ἱερήιον οὐδὲ βοεῖην
ἀρνύσθην, ἃ τε ποσσὶν ἀέθλια γίγνεται ἀνδρῶν,
ἀλλὰ περὶ ψυχῆς θεὸν Ἑκτορος ἵπποδάμοιο.

¹ Translations in this chapter are the author's own, unless published versions are particularly appropriate, in which case the source is credited.

Language and Life in Letters

For it was not for beast of sacrifice or for bull's hide that they strove, such as are men's prizes for swiftness of foot, but it was for the life of horse-taming Hector that they ran.

Cicero is concerned that Atticus (and Caecilius) may think that he is being entirely selfish, and considering only the success of his political career. In fact, the bulk of the letter is devoted to exactly that as he enumerates his rivals in the upcoming elections and his plans to go to Gaul to canvass in the 'swing state'. But the Homeric passage, which explains that Achilles and Hector are not running to win prizes, but are in mortal combat which will determine the fate of their peoples, is intended to remind Atticus that, even if the reason for Cicero's actions really *is* his candidature, this prioritizing of political success is not for mere personal reward but a higher purpose, namely the good of the *res publica*. The passage is neatly bilingual as *ambitio* and *cursus* in their semantic breadth can conjure up the competition and curves of the race track and send the reader to the intensity of the horse-racing in the Homeric quotation. It was no doubt designed to stop Atticus in his tracks and to make him think through, and empathize with, Cicero's conundrum. Cicero knows that Atticus will appreciate the full context of the Homeric passage and the implication that perhaps the awkwardness of their situation is mirrored in the scenes on Olympus which follow, where the gods have to compromise given their split allegiances.

This passage introduces several of the themes of the volume. Along with other evidence for wordplay and coding, it demonstrates that parallel bilingual processing is likely to be occurring in the brains of our highly competent elite epistolographers. This parallel processing involves not simply the languages of the Roman world, but also the broader Graeco-Roman cultural context, especially literary, philosophical and political. The frequent and creative use of Greek literary quotations, however, is not simply part of an erudite game played by a similarly educated ruling elite: it serves a psychological and communicative purpose in creating a space in which awkward problems could be reasoned through and, sometimes, resolved. This is seen most clearly in the letters

of Cicero: when there are options to be discussed, Greek is often deployed, when there is no hope, it does not feature (Chapter 3).

This passage also contemplates the issue of relationships and the importance of carefully negotiating *amicitia* – a practice in which a misstep could spell career suicide. *Amicitia* is performed at length in Roman elite correspondence, which is overwhelmingly political, in the broadest sense, even when the content is not explicitly so (Chapter 3) and served to replace the frequent face-to-face meetings of the elite when members were away from Rome. The political class needed to stay abreast of developments in the centre and elsewhere in the provinces and would send constant streams of letters, which are a lifeline, however difficult to employ, for modern historians of certain periods.² Our opening letter is itself an output of one of the most enduring epistolary interactions, namely that between Cicero and Atticus, whose close relationship, and its link with the frequent Greek of the letters, have often been taken for granted. Chapters 3 and 4 explore notions of intimacy and how this may be expressed, or not, through Greek and present reconstructions of our epistolographic characters and their interactions, especially Cicero and Atticus and Fronto and Marcus Aurelius. The letter shows, however, that these relationships are not performed in isolation. We shall repeatedly see the blurring of public and private spheres, and the over-the-shoulder glances to other potential readers and listeners. Indeed, in some letters we know the author expects, hopes for, or is wary of, an audience beyond the named recipient (Chapter 3).

Roman letters demonstrate that language has *imperium*: the power to resolve problems, to negotiate relationships and to construct characters and even Roman culture itself. This is not an anachronistic view, imposed on the Roman world. Fronto expounds the power of speech as he constantly tries to bring Marcus Aurelius back from philosophy to rhetoric and states bluntly in a letter to Lucius Verus that *imperium* is about both

² Whitehorne 1977: 41.

potestas and *oratio*: a leader commands through words (VdH 123.16–18; Chapter 5). In the same letter, Fronto also closely associates good and bad emperors with the quality of their language, indicating that he sees character and identity as indivisible from speech (VdH 123.3–10; Chapter 5). This echoes Seneca's emphasis on the close link between language and the essence of men. He concludes that *talīs hominibus fuit oratio, qualis uita* 'as a man's speech is, so is his life' (*Ep.* 114.1). Our authors also implicitly and explicitly struggle with the nature of that speech and especially what 'Roman' language, rather than 'Latin' language, might be and how precisely Greek language and culture fit within the creation of the elite Roman world. In two letters of recommendation, Fronto states that Greek terms cannot be Roman if they refer to concepts which are not Roman, an extreme view, not necessarily reflective of his practice, but which underlines his interest in, and manipulation of, the interconnection of language and culture (VdH 111.16–20; 173.15–16, Chapter 4). In their linguistic awareness and concern with the links between language, identities and culture, elite Roman letter writers are, in a sense, sociolinguists themselves.

Utraque lingua: The Language of Letters and the Construction of Identities

With the exception of Suetonius (*c.* AD 69–after AD 122), the main authors discussed in detail in this volume, Cicero (106–43 BC), Pliny (*c.* AD 61–112), Fronto (*c.* AD 90/95–167) and Marcus Aurelius (AD 121–180), who is Fronto's most frequent correspondent, have large sets of extant letters assigned to them. All five are skilled rhetoricians, whose use of language is sophisticated and sensitive. Suetonius features as his works contain direct citations of letters and a comparative approach with 'real' collections of correspondence and in particular the patterns of their use of Greek may allow us not only to understand better the Suetonian text, but also, since the Suetonian corpus presents other types and layers of evidence alongside the letters within the same text, to aid the reconstruction of the linguistic and cultural world creating the letters (Chapter 5).

The bilingual practices of these elite Roman letter writers of the Late Republic and the first two centuries AD who write primarily in Latin and switch into Greek have long attracted attention. Scholars have used the letters in debates about which of the two languages may have been learnt first, whether the conversations of the Roman elite regularly included Greek (Chapter 2),³ whether code-switching in the letters might be marked or unmarked (Chapter 3),⁴ and whether these bilingual practices reflect expressions of Romanness, whatever that might mean, rather than ‘genuine biculturalism’ (Chapter 4).⁵ Expressions of identity, linguistic attitudes and the broader cultural associations of the languages will be considered throughout this volume, and an attempt made to assess whether the letter writers saw themselves as operating in two languages and cultures or as writing not *latine et graece* but in one intertwined language.

Bilingualism forces us to confront conceptual issues. If languages express identities and influence the way we construct and view the world, what happens when people are bilingual? Bilinguals regularly remark that they associate one or other of their languages with various concepts, emotions and memories.⁶ So how do we reconcile the suggestion that different languages at some level might encode a different *Weltansicht* with their presence within the same individuals? One way to solve this apparent problem has been to view bilinguals as switching between different identities not within a context of ‘either/or’ associations, but of both simultaneously and the term ‘biculturalism’ has been used to express the integration of more than one cultural-linguistic strand within the same community and/or individual. However, the term ‘biculturalism’, itself variously defined and poorly empirically investigated and theorized,⁷ is problematic: bilinguals may not always recognize

³ See, for example, Jocelyn 1999, Swain 2002.

⁴ See, for example, Adams 2003a; Swain 2002.

⁵ See, for example, Swain 2002, 2004.

⁶ See Pavlenko 2014.

⁷ See Benet-Martínez and Haritatos 2005 for further discussion.

it as relevant for their experiences and may even argue that their bilingualism is not associated with any sense of duality at all, or is more binary than the term ‘biculturalism’ might imply. The analysis of the bilingualism of the Roman letters acts as a lens through which to explore how elite Romans constructed their identities through language.

In exploring the use of Greek in Latin letters, we have found it useful to focus on the phenomenon of ‘code-switching’, the full-blown switch from one language to another in both bilingual speech and writing and of relevance far beyond the purely linguistic. Extensive research into modern code-switching has demonstrated that variations in the use or avoidance of code-switching and the modes employed are intimately linked with social circumstances, levels of bilingualism, attitudinal factors and, in non-oral contexts, the types of writing involved. Cross-culturally it seems that code-switching is more common in less formal genres and, in the Roman world, the purity of language striven for under the banner of *Latinitas* on the model of *Hellenismos* appears to have encouraged a resistance to overt mixing.⁸ The debate about what constitutes a *lingua Romana* and the correct way to be a Roman linguistically, especially in a bilingual context, stretches across the centuries and is implicitly and explicitly, particularly in the case of Fronto, expressed in the correspondence explored here. Comparative analysis of the code-switches in these letters, systematically collected and analysed at: <http://csrl.classics.cam.ac.uk/index.html>, allows us to contribute an empirically based new perspective to the broader discussion of the entangled relationship between Latin and Greek language and culture, which is fundamental to our understanding of the Roman elite and what it means to be Roman.⁹

⁸ Callahan (2004: 69) notes that ‘[w]ritten formats are often considered to be more formal, and formality constrains the use of code-switching. In speech as well as in writing, codeswitching tends to be restricted to certain genres’. For code-switching across time and space, see Gardner-Chloros and Weston 2015. For *Latinitas* and *Hellenismos*, see Clackson 2015b.

⁹ The database was designed collaboratively by Elder and Mullen. Data collection was undertaken by them with assistance from Rob Stroud, who populated the

Research into Ancient and Modern Code-Switching

Code-switching in writing can be defined as the switch from one language to another within a single text, comparable to the definition of spoken code-switching as the use of more than one language within the same conversation or sentence. It is distinct from other bilingualism in writing, such as translation, ‘translingualism’ (writing in more than one language or in a language which is not the mother tongue),¹⁰ language choice according to literary genre and language shift over time.¹¹ Code-switching is characterized by its use by bilinguals and its relative spontaneity (or, perhaps better, in the written medium, its flexibility and lack of fixedness), whereas ‘borrowing’ designates forms incorporated into the receiving language and used by monolinguals. This might sound straightforward, but identifying switches can be problematic.¹² We should remember that borrowing and code-switching reside on a continuum and that the linguistic classification is not attached to the words absolutely, but may depend on the time period, context and linguistic groups, together with the preferences of the individual. Indeed, the same word can even be used by the same author at different times as a borrowing and as a code-switch, for example Cicero’s *sittybae*, which is discussed in [Chapter 3](#). Modern sociolinguists struggle with a range of problems in diagnosing and analysing contemporary code-switching,¹³ but these are multiplied when we tackle ancient written material. For example, as we shall see, it is not always clear what might constitute a borrowing: since we are dealing with such a restricted volume of the total spoken and written evidence

syntactic and grammatical fields in the database for the corpora, with the exception of *Ad Atticum* and *Ad Quintum fratrem*.

¹⁰ Kellman 2000, 2003.

¹¹ See Gardner-Chloros and Weston 2015, for further discussion of literary code-switching.

¹² See, for example, Langslow 2012 and Mullen 2012, 2013a, for the difficulties of distinguishing between code-switching and other bilingual phenomena.

¹³ We should not assume that it is ‘easier’ for modern linguists to assess code-switching. Problems for them include the over-abundance of material and the fact that practitioners of code-switching are sometimes embarrassed and therefore mis-report or avoid it under examination.

from the ancient world, it is often difficult to trace the extent of a word's integration, and commentary on the practice is not easy to find.

Studying Classics has always entailed an appreciation of bilingualism and biculturalism and yet only more recently has full engagement with modern bi- and multilingualism theory and practice begun.¹⁴ Pioneering work by Adams and others built explicitly on earlier analysis of bilingualism in literary texts, such as Cicero's epistolary output and the representation of linguistic varieties in authors such as Plautus and Petronius,¹⁵ but expanded the view to take into account the mass of work in modern bilingualism studies. This encouraged others to venture systematically beyond literature, initiating a wave of research on a range of non-literary outputs, for example on papyri, wooden tablets, lead sheets and *instrumentum domesticum*.¹⁶ In particular, the specific bilingual phenomenon of code-switching was identified and explored in a range of ancient sources.¹⁷ In turn, and partly inspired by Adams' publications,¹⁸ modern code-switching research, which has focused on the oral,¹⁹ has started to consider written evidence as an extension of its domain. In recent years, a number of studies have focused on computer-mediated communication, inspired by the resemblance to oral discourse of much writing in blogs, emails, SMS, Twitter and so on.²⁰ There has also been

¹⁴ See, for example, Adams 2003a; Adams, Janse and Swain 2002; Biville et al. 2008; Cotton et al. 2009; Mullen 2013a; Mullen and James 2012.

¹⁵ Studies of Greek in Latin literature have been undertaken for centuries and include the following: Dean 1918a, 1918b; Housman 1910; Rose 1921; Shipp 1955; Steele 1900.

¹⁶ We know that contextual uncertainties arise with literary sources; in non-literary, archaeological material such as funerary epigraphy or inscribed pottery the contextual holes are often even deeper; see, for example, Mullen 2013b for the problems in the interpretation of apparent code-switching in the La Graufesenque graffiti.

¹⁷ For work on Greek in Latin literature, explicitly using the concept of code-switching, see Adams 2003a *passim*; Dubuisson 2000, 2005; Jackson 2014; Jocelyn 1999; Pelttari 2011; Rochette 2007, 2013; Swain 2002, 2004; Uden 2011; Valette 2014; Wenskus 1993, 1998, 2003.

¹⁸ Adams 2003a is cited as representative of the work in Classics several times; see, for example, Sebba, Mahootian and Jonsson 2012.

¹⁹ This no doubt stems from the belief in sociolinguistics that the oral is the spontaneous and natural form.

²⁰ See, for example, Sebba, Mahootian and Jonsson 2012.

a concerted effort to consider written code-switching more broadly, including in literature, with a growing awareness that this material can be usefully studied and compared with the oral evidence, despite the usual disciplinary boundaries, which mean literary material does not always fall under the jurisdiction of linguistics departments. This drive has been spurred on by the growth in the study of literary multilingualism more generally and by several high-profile texts employing code-switching (e.g. Zadie Smith's novel *White Teeth*). As work into code-switching is broadening and deepening the questions seem to multiply and '[t]he three way relationship between spoken, written and literary multilingualism ... remains to be clarified'.²¹ Our investigation of ancient letters tries to shed light on this relationship and to continue the discussion with modern sociolinguists, medievalists and others.²²

The vast research output on modern code-switching comprises three main strands: sociolinguistic, grammatical and psycholinguistic.²³ This volume has been inspired by all three, and primarily by the first. For some considerable time, code-switching was considered an aberration and the result of poor competence.²⁴ The sociolinguistic approach of anthropologist Gumperz and co-workers stimulated a change in attitudes.²⁵ Code-switching came to be regarded as a phenomenon of competent bilinguals and as functional in their speech, with evidence used to demonstrate

²¹ Gardner-Chloros and Weston 2015: 188.

²² See Gardner-Chloros and Weston 2015. Written code-switching allows, for example, complexities in visual representation, such as page layout, images and writing styles, which require proper analysis; see Sebba, Mahootian and Jonsson 2012. For medieval code-switching, see Schendl and Wright 2011. The detailed analysis of code-switching in elite Roman letters should allow us to attempt to consider the similarities and differences between the code-switching found in Roman letters and early modern/modern equivalents, and between these and bilingual speech. For early modern/modern letters with code-switching, see, for example, the correspondence of Virginia Woolf, the eighteenth-century letters of the tenth Earl of Pembroke and his circle (Pembroke 1942), the Corpus of Early English Correspondence compiled by a team at the University of Helsinki (Nurmi and Pahta 2012), modern Spanish–English letters and notes (Montes-Alcalá 2005)) and between these and bilingual speech.

²³ See Gardner-Chloros 2009 for an overview.

²⁴ Weinreich 1953 is the *locus classicus*.

²⁵ See, for example, Gumperz 1982.

that in circumstances where either of two languages could be used, the choice of language could make a difference to the meaning, based on several factors, including the external associations of the languages. A range of specific recurring functions of code-switching were identified, including quotation, interjection, reiteration and exclamation. The later Conversation Analysis approach, popular in the 1980s and 1990s, focused on conversational internal approaches and showed that the choice between the languages in turn-taking could be functional even in the absence of any reference to the external associations of the languages.²⁶ Negativity, for example, could be expressed simply by answering someone in a language other than the one just used. Both approaches (i.e. the text internal and the contextualized) should be employed in code-switching studies, ancient and modern. Indeed it is hard to see how the former can operate without the latter, given that a view that a code-switch has occurred in the absence of reference to external context indicates the analysis of the broader context.

Grammatical studies of code-switching were extensively pursued in the 1980s and 1990s and continue to this day, although exceptions to all the models (e.g. the Matrix Language Frame (MLF) model pioneered by Myers-Scotton) and constraints proposed have led to a widely held view that this research can only ever produce tendencies rather than absolutes.²⁷ Chapter 2 explores the grammatical shape of epistolary code-switching from Cicero to Fronto and compares it to what we know about modern assessments of both spoken and written outputs. This analysis demonstrates that the MLF model proposed for oral code-switching is useful in general terms, but the application and revision of it in detail for Roman code-switching would not necessarily be a fruitful task; the claims of the MLF to universality have been challenged and, in any case, it is unclear what improvements to our understanding of Roman elite

²⁶ See, for example, Gafaranga 2009. For Conversation Analysis, see Auer 1984 and 1998a.

²⁷ For the MLF model, see Myers-Scotton 1993, 2002, 2006 and Chapter 2.

code-switching, beyond the very narrowly linguistic, might be gained through such an investigation. Modern sociolinguists do not agree on whether there are grammatical/syntactic forms of code-switching that are permissible in writing, but not in speech, and vice versa. Linguistic games, such as those played by Ausonius in his letters to Paulinus of Nola, including rapid elaborate switching between Latin and Greek in verse and even extending to intra-word switches (*Epistles* XII), suggest that, in certain genres of writing, freedom in code-switching can sometimes be greater than in speech, although these intra-word switches cannot be easily paralleled in our epistolary authors (see [Chapter 2](#) for a handful of possible examples, including Cicero's *facteon* and Fronto's *rhetoricotata*). In the absence of spoken evidence from the ancient world, collaboration with modern sociolinguists may help to establish the possible details and ramifications of any divergences between oral and written output from a grammatical perspective.

The third main strand, that is psycholinguistic approaches to code-switching, sometimes involves empirical laboratory-based analysis and has striven to understand the links between bilingual speech, cognition and the brain. In particular researchers have been interested in understanding the nature of parallel processing, activation of languages in the brain and ways in which code-switching is subconsciously triggered, for example with bilingual homophones. Clearly, much psycholinguistic research will be alien to ours on code-switching in textual sources, but we can be informed by this additional dimension and identify examples of parallel processing, triggering and bilingual wordplay in the letters. We can see a possible example of bilingual wordplay in the letter that Pliny writes to Maturus Arrianus in January AD 100, reporting the trial of Marius Priscus, a former governor of Africa, in which Pliny had the stage, with Tacitus, on the side of the provincials (II. xi). This was clearly a major event in the political life of the time and Pliny endearingly speaks of his nervousness about declaiming in the presence of the emperor. Towards the end of the letter, after stating that the very important trial has ended (*hic finis cognitionis amplissimae*), he turns to a smaller matter,

that of Priscus' deputy, Hostilius Firminus, who had been heavily implicated in the wrong-doing.

superest tamen λιτούργιον non leue, Hostilius Firminus legatus Mari Prisci, qui permixtus causae grauiter uehementerque uexatus est. (11.xi.23)

There remains, however, another not-insignificant minor matter, namely that of Hostilius Firminus, legate of Marius Priscus, who was mixed up in the charge and seriously and deeply involved.

The Greek term here, λιτούργιον, is related to the Greek term ἡ λειτουργία 'public service' and not found in the *TLG* and only cited in *LSJ* as occurring in Pliny, with the meaning 'subsidiary action springing out of a trial'. If we take the preferred reading of the editors (and do not follow the manuscript variant λειτ- for λιτ-), then we are confronted with the Hellenistic form, which allows Pliny a wordplay with Greek λιτός 'simple, light, small' (also with long -i- in Greek), since he follows the unusual Greek term immediately with the Latin *non leue*.²⁸ Given that we are talking about Hostilius Firminus whose name could evoke the Latin adjective *firmus* 'strong, robust', perhaps picked up also in *grauiter*, Pliny may also be intending a wordplay with the name, which is a strategy that he employs numerous times,²⁹ as does Cicero, for example, when he claims to recognize a letter of Volumnius Eutrapelus by its εὐτραπεία 'ready wit' (*Fam.* vii.32.1), playing directly on Volumnius' cognomen. An even clearer example from Cicero's letter on obscenity (*Fam.* ix.22.3), which strongly implies the correspondents have both languages 'switched-on' continuously, is discussed in [Chapter 2](#).

Graece loqui in latino sermone: Ancient Views on Code-Switching

Although code-switching has been largely studied to date in modern contexts, in both speech and writing it is not exclusively

²⁸ For this point, see Biville 1995: 31.

²⁹ Gibson and Morello 2012: 42 n. 15 provide some further possible examples and suggest that 'Pliny's persistent punning on the names of his addressees is a subject which deserves separate study'.

a modern phenomenon or concept. It was a linguistic reality for the Roman elite, who produced the bulk of our extant *epistulae*, and non-epistolary contemporary sources report plenty of examples in speech. Apparently, Cassius spoke in Greek whenever he was feeling affectionate (φιλοφρονούμενος, Plu. *Brut.* 40.2–3) and various versions of the assassination of Caesar describe Casca addressing his brother in Greek and Caesar addressing Casca in Latin but Brutus in Greek.³⁰ More work remains to be undertaken on the precise nature of the spread of, and restrictions on, code-switching in Roman literature, but it appears that the choices made by Roman authors might be influenced by two factors: the formality and social context of the genre and the *auctoritas* of key players.³¹ Code-switching is particularly common in representations of speech (e.g. Plautus, Petronius) and appears to have been accepted to a greater or lesser extent in selected genres. Code-switching occurs relatively often in comedy, mime and other early fragmentary genres (including early epic), in some technical works (Lucretius, Vitruvius), in satire (Lucilius, Varro, Petronius, Martial and Juvenal, though rejected by Horace), in so-called miscellanists (Aulus Gellius and Ausonius) and, perhaps with the highest frequency, in elite epistolography. All three of the major extant first-century BC to second-century AD collections of personal correspondence, those of Cicero, Pliny and Fronto, contain code-switching into Greek, and Suetonius cites letters of Augustus which switch into Greek (*Tib.* 21, *Cl.* 4), despite the claim that the emperor was not completely comfortable speaking or writing in Greek (*Aug.* 89) (Chapter 5).³² The code-switching found in the main Roman letter collections is not only practised by the protagonists whose names appear on the covers of the editions: about 10 per cent of Cicero's letters are written by members of his household and elite correspondents, and his own letters sometimes cite

³⁰ Plu. *Brut.* 17; *Caes.* 66; Suet. *Jul.* 82. See Jocelyn 1999: 178 for these and other examples.

³¹ See Adams 2003a; Jocelyn 1999; Mullen 2015.

³² See Townend 1960 for a discussion of the origins of the Greek in Suetonius and Chapter 5 for a contextualization of the Greek switches within the Suetonian corpus as a whole.

the words of others. The case is even more pronounced with Fronto's collection: the numbers of letters to and from the main correspondents (Fronto and Marcus Aurelius) are roughly equal, although a smaller number of letters from Fronto to a range of other recipients is also included, hence the assignment of the collection. Pliny writes to a number of recipients, although there is only one book, book 10, that contains letters not only penned by Pliny, but also by the emperor Trajan. Through these examples, *inter alia*, we can establish that code-switching was part of a broader elite discourse, not merely a feature of the named protagonists' idiolects.

The practice of switching between Latin and Greek was clearly recognized and is occasionally remarked upon by commentators. There appears to have been an awareness in the ancient world that the practice of code-switching could be ridiculed, and should be avoided in some contexts, as Cicero highlights in the *De Officiis*:

ut enim sermone eo debemus uti qui innatus est nobis, ne ut quidam Graeca uerba inculcantes iure optimo rideamur

For just as we ought to employ our native tongue, in case, like certain people who continually force in Greek words, we attract perfectly justified ridicule. (1.111);

and the *Tusculan Disputations*:

M. dicam, si potero, Latine. scis enim me Graece loqui in Latino sermone non plus solere quam in Graeco Latine. A. et recte quidem. (1.15)

M. 'I'll put it [a saying of Epicharmus] into Latin if I can. For you know I am no more inclined to speak Greek in a Latin discourse than Latin in a Greek.'
A. 'And rightly so.'

Horace too, though he uses, for example, Greek morphology with Greek names, attacks the code-switching of the earlier satirist Lucilius, ridiculing those who are impressed and saying that it is a dereliction of the *patria* and akin to the embarrassing mixed language of the Canusians (*Sat.* 1.10.20–35) (Chapter 6).

On the other hand, Apuleius presents a passage that may discuss the practice of code-switching and, if so, compares it to

the skill of jumping from horse to horse. Although it starts with the obligatory apology for any offence caused by lack of perfect expertise (we shall see Fronto making a similarly disingenuous fuss about his non-native use of Greek in [Chapter 4](#)), the reference to *desultoria scientia* is meant to suggest to the reader that such writing drawing on both Latin and Greek requires control and skill. Dubuisson weighs up the meaning of several terms in the passage and offers the following translation:³³

en ecce praefamur ueniam, si quid exotici ac forensis sermonis rudis locutor offendero. iam haec equidem ipsa uocis immutatio desultoriae scientiae stilo quem accessimus respondet. fabulam Graecanicam incipimus. (Apuleius, *Met.* 1.1.5–6)

Voilà, voilà. Nous demandons d’avance pardon, si le parleur que je suis d’une langue exotique – pardon, étrangère – doit heurter en quelque manière. A vrai dire, ce remplacement d’un mot par un autre répond déjà au genre d’art de la voltige que nous avons abordé: c’est une histoire pleine de grec que nous commençons. (trans. Dubuisson)

Dubuisson states that the *scientia* here is ‘n’est pas, dès lors, d’ordre littéraire (changement de genre, de thème) mais bien linguistique: il s’agit du phénomène que les linguistes modernes appellent “code-switching”’.³⁴ Swain takes a broader bicultural, rather than specifically linguistic, view of the passage:

[w]hat he means is that his story is Roman but Greek in form/set in Greece. This is its style and the style recalls, he says, the *scientia* of jumping from one horse to another. This expertise refers to Apuleius’ own biculturalism. When he says his ‘changing of language corresponds’ to this style, he is not referring to the Greek source of his book, but to its typology, which demonstrates familiarity with Greek while staying carefully within the bounds of what was sanctioned by the Latin heritage.³⁵

Whichever interpretation we choose, the skilful negotiation of both Greek and Latin described by Apuleius here suggests the possibility of contexts where code-switching could be not only tolerated, but even appreciated.

Letters were one such context. As Cicero explains in a letter to Paetus, these could permit a specific register, a *plebeius*

³³ Dubuisson 2000: 613.

³⁴ Dubuisson 2000: 612.

³⁵ Swain 2004: 16.

sermo with *cottidianis uerbis* (*Fam.* 188.1) (Chapter 2), and the Greek treatises on letter writing explicitly discuss a difference between rhetorical and epistolary style and the similarity of the latter to conversation, although care is always taken to raise it above loose vernacular.³⁶ Inspired by the Ciceronian practice, the only Latin technical discussion of epistolography, the fourth-century *Ars rhetorica* 27 of Iulius Victor, specifically refers to code-switching in personal letters:

Graece aliquid addere litteris suauē est, si id neque intempestiue neque crebro facias: et prouerbio uti non ignoto percommodum est, et uersiculo aut parte uersus.

It is pleasant to add some Greek to your letters, if it is not ill-timed or too frequent: and it is especially appropriate to use a well-known proverb, and a line of poetry or a bit of verse.

We can assume that the earlier writers Fronto and Marcus Aurelius also followed Cicero in ascribing to this view, given their practice, and we even find a direct comment by Fronto on Marcus' interweaving of Greek into Latin, which itself weaves in two Greek loanwords *cocco* and *ostro* with two Latin *luteo* and *purpura* when listing colour terms:

enimvero omnia istaec inter Graecos uersus Latina ita scite alternata sunt a te et interposita, ut est ille in pyrrhicha uersicolorum discursus, quom amicti cocco alii, alii luteo et ostro et purpura, alii aliisque cohaerentes concursant. (VdH 8.20–9.3)

Indeed all that Latin is interwoven by you and alternates with Greek verses as skilfully as the movements of the multi-coloured performers in the Pyrrhic dance when they run together blending now with these, now with those, dressed some in scarlet, others in yellow, and purple and violet.

We shall return to this statement and its context in Chapter 4, but in the meantime we must remember not to assume that code-switching was ever liberally employed in elite letters: it is a practice that, even in private correspondence, seems to have been carefully policed along topical and personal lines. We shall see that Cicero's declaration about the use of *plebeius sermo* in his letters must be treated cautiously. He admits a more colloquial

³⁶ For Demetrius, Ps-Demetrius, Ps-Libanius, Philostratus of Lemnos and Gregory of Nazianzus on letter writing, see Malherbe 1988; Poster 2007; Trapp 2003: 42–6.

The Empirical Basis

tone at times than in his forensic speeches, for example, but his correspondence is not written in a loose, informal language of the street. His letters are carefully crafted, sometimes rhetorically impressive pieces, which can cleverly adopt or avoid the conversational pose. Indeed many of Cicero's letters *Ad Familiares*, which together form the collection in which his statement on the use of everyday vocabulary appears, are relatively formal and studiously composed. The question 'how oral is written code-switching?', which is often asked by modern sociolinguists, is shown to be too simplistic for ancient sources (and no doubt modern too) ([Chapter 2](#)). 'Orality' can be a feature of texts, not necessarily simply the direct representation of oral output, but a complex interaction based on knowledge of the spoken word: Roman appreciation of rhetoric and register across the spoken and written word demonstrates that a binary division between these outputs can be unhelpful.

The Empirical Basis

Important recent works devoted to code-switching in Roman letter writers, many of whom were inspired by modern code-switching research, have opened up new avenues to investigate. Perhaps the most influential of these have been by Adams ([2003a](#)) and Swain ([2002](#), [2004](#)), although, sometimes by the authors' own admission, this work has tended towards impressionistic studies rather than empirically rooted analysis. The fine detail of the cultural policing of the use of Greek in the Latin letters can best be explored with the aid of sensitive employment of an empirical basis.³⁷ The new online searchable

³⁷ We have thought about the value of statistical analysis for our data. In our view, it is not suitable for any sort of statistical significance testing. We are not performing sophisticated statistical analysis, but rather simply presenting the total examples of the various categories of code-switching we have identified and their proportion of the code-switching as a whole. We also compare the results of different authors and over time, but do not rely too much on the bare statistics, recognizing that they add up to relatively few examples. There has recently been a tendency for some in Humanities to expect statistical significance tests in all research contexts using data, as if this were an essential measure of validity of the data and its interpretation: we might suggest that this trend could be misleading in contexts where such an approach is inappropriate.

database (<http://csrl.classics.cam.ac.uk/index.html>) responds to Adams' call for a more systematic exploration.³⁸

The creation of the database was not straightforward, especially on the matter of linguistic categorization. Three categories of bilingual phenomena are commonly used by classicists: interference (the unintentional transfer of first language features into the second language), borrowing and code-switching.³⁹ There was little debate over the possibility of frequent interference features: the quality of the competence in both languages of the Roman authors under the microscope here was unlikely to result in interference features. Even if interference features had occurred, the subsequent processes of editing and transmission would make it unlikely that any would have survived or may have introduced features making it impossible to be sure to whom the interference should be assigned. That is not to say that interference features do not occur, but that at a lexical level at least they would be relatively unlikely (for example mistakenly using a Greek word instead of Latin). Instead the main question was whether words could legitimately be analysed as code-switching or borrowing (loanwords). For example, several Greek words are found in the Frontonian corpus apparently Latinized and in Latin script,⁴⁰ but not attested earlier (e.g. *daduchis* VdH 132.18, *opisthodomis* VdH 12.3 (although this is attested in Greek script in Varro, *LL* 5.160)) or not apparently attested anywhere else in Latin sources (e.g. *encomiographos* VdH 31.2). Does the fact that these words may not have been widely taken up in Latin matter? Or might it be enough for the word to have been accepted as Latin in the idiolect of the author for it to count as a borrowing and not as a code-switch? We will discuss these hard-to-categorize examples in detail in the relevant chapters: they are not only relevant for our understanding

³⁸ Adams 2003a: 345.

³⁹ For a detailed discussion, see Adams, Janse and Swain 2002; Mullen 2013a; Mullen and James 2012;.

⁴⁰ For issues of determining the script used in the original letters, see Chapter 4.

of the language practices in the letters but in lexicographical and broader linguistic analyses of the Roman world. The database of code-switches is large and detailed (see [Table 1](#)) and was designed in the hope that it would respond to the needs of a range of researchers and could be asked questions which we had not yet conceived.

Perhaps the most difficult analytical work in compiling the database was assigning the categorization ‘Function of code-switch’ to each example. Faced with code-switches that could function in multiple ways, it was deemed safest to assign what might be loosely termed a ‘local’ functional interpretation to each example of code-switching, given that in many instances there is some degree of objective reasoning for the assignment.⁴¹ For example, in Pliny’s first book of correspondence we encounter a string of three intra-sentential switches (within the sentence or clause boundary) in a letter to Tacitus, where the primary function of the switching to Greek is to quote a text in the original (here *Odyssey* II.212; III.222; III.224).

*nec uero cum haec dico illum Homericum ἀμετροεπῇ probō, sed hunc: καὶ ἔπεα
νιφάδεσσιν ἑοικότα χειμερίησιν non quia non et ille mihi ualdissime placeat παῦρα
μέν, ἀλλὰ μάλα λιγέως. (I.XX.22)*

With these words I am not in truth praising that Homeric character ‘unbridled of tongue’, but this other one ‘and his words were like winter snow’, and there’s another that pleases me very much ‘at no great length, but very clearly’.

These code-switches can be assigned the basic function ‘Quotation: literary (Homer)’, and form part of one of the best attested functional groups, namely quotation. Assigning other, arguably ‘higher-level’, or ‘global’, functions of the code-switches, such as marking in-group solidarity or divergence, channelling biculturalism, highlighting of societal realism, underlining of central themes, heightening emotion and creating bilingual identities involves more subjectivity on the part

⁴¹ For the terms ‘local’ and ‘global’, see [Jonsson 2010](#) and below.

Table 1 *Information included in the database*

Field heading	Applies to	Description
Corpus	All corpora	The main named author of the work: Cicero; Pliny; Fronto; Suetonius.
Reference	All corpora	References to the most useful corpora of texts. Where the texts are difficult to navigate, page numbers are added (e.g. for Haines' Loeb edition of Fronto).
Date	All corpora	Dates are provided where these are available, some are frustratingly vague (Fronto's correspondence), others are frequently accurate (Cicero's correspondence).
Source of code-switch	All corpora	Since the Suetonian text offers evidence of code-switches from sources other than letters (e.g. inscriptions, Suetonius' narrative), this column was necessary to identify the context of the code-switch.
Author	All corpora	Very often this is known with a good degree of accuracy, except in some cases in Fronto's correspondence.
Addressee	All corpora (only the epistolary examples in Suetonius)	Often this is known with a good degree of accuracy, though there are exceptions across all the corpora.
Citation of Greek code-switch	All corpora	The Greek of the code-switch is set out, and if readings vary between the editions referenced, they are given.
Latin context	All corpora	The Latin within which the Greek code-switch occurs is set out.

The Empirical Basis

Table 1 (*cont.*)

Field heading	Applies to	Description
Inter-/Intra-sentential	All corpora	The switch is classified as either inter- or intra-sentential. See Chapter 2 for further commentary.
Function of code-switch	All corpora	One or more salient functions of the switch into Greek are offered. Although clearly a highly subjective process, the authors have collaborated extensively on this to present a consistent analysis. See below for further discussion.
Flagging	All corpora	A note as to whether the switch is explicitly commented on in the text with phrases such as <i>Graeci ... appellant</i> or <i>quae Graeci ... uocant</i> . [*] Quotations from authors are often introduced, but this practice has not been included under the 'flagging' category as it tends to serve other purposes (the citation of the author and the origin or point of the quotation) rather than expressly highlighting a change of language (Chapter 2).
Syntactic and grammatical information	All corpora	Comments as to the syntactic and grammatical content of the switch and, where relevant, its link with the surrounding Latin are provided.
Context	All corpora	This presents a brief summary of the content of the letter at the point of the code-switch.

(*continued*)

Table 1 (*cont.*)

Field heading	Applies to	Description
Comments	All corpora	Additional notes, philological or otherwise, are placed here, including, for example, information on whether the terms occur elsewhere, and whether it is possible that a switch may have been, at least in part, triggered by the same or similar switch in a previous letter within the epistolary conversation. Triggering does not seem to be the main reason for the switches in many cases and several examples (e.g. ἐπέχειν and associated words in <i>Att.</i> VI.6.3 and VI.9.3 in exchanges between Cicero and Atticus where the function of the switch might have been classified as ‘triggered’ have been categorized as ‘Quotation: Atticus’). Of course we do not necessarily have all the relevant letters and firm dates are not always provided in the text so our chronological understanding of the letters has to be treated with care (especially in Fronto’s case), and thus our ‘timeline’ for any triggering may be faulty.**

* See Pfaff 1979: 297–8 for modern equivalents.

** The order in which letters are read is important (see Beard 2002; Gibson 2012). This is one reason why the flexibility with ordering letter collections offered by digital databases might be valuable: we need them to be in chronological order to think about triggering, code-alternation, and so on, but may want to read them in their ancient arrangement into books for other reasons.

of the analyst.⁴² Indeed in many cases higher-order functions are derived from larger portions of the text, even the whole letter, rather than simply the individual code-switch under investigation and the precise role of the code-switch within this broader context is difficult to pin down. In the case of the passage for Tacitus, the higher-level functions are apparently easy to uncover: Pliny taps into a shared culture and education through his quotation of *the* canonical text, but in snippets such that the reader must know the text intimately to be sure to whom the *illum ... hunc ... ille* refer. If he does, he recognizes the pair of Odysseus (*hunc*) and Menelaus (*ille*), who, with the addition of Nestor (not mentioned, the *illum* instead refers here to the unimpressive Thersites), are the three Homeric models of eloquence described, in Latin, by Quintilian (12.10.64).⁴³ Here we have a vivid evocation of bilingualism in language, text and culture and a clear demonstration of a tightly controlled, membership-only, in-group communication. It was deemed safer to present the lower-order, ‘local’, functions for every code-switch in the database and to analyse both those and the higher-order functions discursively in this volume. But, of course, the assignment of both ‘lower’ and ‘higher’ order functions is a subjective activity in itself and prone to anachronistic perspectives. As Zentella has remarked, even for contemporary examples, ‘pinpointing the purpose of each code switch is a task as fraught with difficulty as imputing the reasons for a monolingual’s choice of one synonym over another, and no complete accounting may ever be possible’.⁴⁴ Categorization in databases is useful, but must be supported by more detailed and complex commentary. One disadvantage is that the rigidity

⁴² Higher-order functional discussions range from Valdés-Fallis’ discussion of the creations of ‘powerful bilingual images’ (1977) to more recent work by Hess describing code-switching as ‘a liminally creative and fertile linguistic underpinning for literary designs’, which serves to ‘underline central themes of alienation, transition and liminality’ (1996: 17), Omole’s (1998) highlighting of the societal realism expressed by code-switching and Jonsson’s appreciation of large number of higher-order functions (2010, especially 1309).

⁴³ For the trio Odysseus, Menelaus and Thersites, see Fronto’s discussion of eloquence for Marcus at VdH 138.11–15.

⁴⁴ Zentella 1997: 99.

of the fields sometimes forces categorizations for examples that seem to resist them, and the resultant database creates the illusion of certainty. The process of creating the database was, however, formative, provoking us to battle with hierarchies of functions and interlocking, multiple functionality and to think across the corpora in reconsidering our interpretations of both specific code-switches and code-switching more generally.⁴⁵

Code-switches in our authors were not categorized following any particular set of modern classifications or with conscious prejudgement about the likely functional content of the switches. They were assigned a categorization (in some cases more than one) that seemed to fit each example best, based on close reading. The resultant list of 'lower-level' functions may not seem completely coherent as a group (though most offered by modern sociolinguists on more contemporary evidence seem equally eclectic),⁴⁶ but has been generated by the evidence (Table 2). We were constantly reminded of the inadequacies of our appreciation of the cultural context: we picked up as many examples of quotation, for example, as we could, but were much more likely to spot an unintroduced, previously unknown, verse rather than prose quotation. In some instances, we suspect a quotation is being used, but unless we know it from another source or the letter itself provides specific commentary, we cannot be sure whether a quotation is intended or not, which highlights the memory-oriented, literary-imbued universe in which these authors operated, and the limitations of our access to it. Despite the frequent categorization of

⁴⁵ The issue of multiple functionality also applies to modern code-switching, as Jonsson (2010: 1298) remarks '[t]he loci are not necessarily mutually exclusive and several instances of CS could fit into more than one category', so too does the notion of hierarchies of functions: 'I propose that CS can be regarded as having both local and global functions. Thus in cases where we detect a particular local function of a code-switch, e.g. emphasis, a global function, e.g. that of marking identity may simultaneously be present' (2010: 1298).

⁴⁶ A list of recurring functions of modern research on code-switches in writing might include the following: quotation; emphasis; clarification/elaboration; repetition; commentary; exclamation; directives; change of topic; change of interlocutor; parenthesis; idiomatic expression; symmetric alternation; triggered switch; stylistic; lexical need; interjection; and expletives amongst others; see, for example, Callahan 2004; Montes-Acalá 2001 on writing; Gumperz 1982; Poplack 1980 on speech.

Table 2 *Functions of code-switches*

Functional category	Description	Example
Citation of Greek word under discussion	Greek words cited when an author provides a wider discussion about them, often because he is discussing their meaning or translation in Latin.	<i>id [uerbum] ab ἐπιτοχῇ remotissimum est</i> (CIC. Att. XIII.21)
Code	Switches deployed, at least superficially, to encode or conceal information from those outside the epistolary relationship: this purpose of concealment is usually highlighted explicitly (Chapter 3).	<i>illum uero qui nondum habitus est, quem illa Βοῶπις, cum e Solonio redierit, ad te est relatura, sic uelim putes, nihil hoc posse mihi esse iucundius</i> (CIC. Att. II.9.1: here Βοῶπις refers to Clodia)
Commentary	Code-switches in this category do not necessarily supply any new information, but instead ‘elaborate’ or comment on information given in the other language (Callahan 2004: 72).	<i>bona indoles, ἐὰν διαμείνῃ</i> (CIC. Att. XV.12)
Description	This function is assigned when the primary purpose of the code-switch is description.	<i>et secum habebat hominem χρηστομαθῆ</i> (CIC. Att. I.6)
Discourse marker	Code-switches whose primary function is to organize the discourse rather than to describe or comment on it.	<i>αὐτίκα γὰρ hanc, quae mehercule mihi magno dolori est dilexi enim hominem, procura, quantulacumque est, Precianam hereditatem</i> (CIC. Att. VI.9)

(continued)

Table 2 (*cont.*)

Functional category	Description	Example
Exclamation	This category is assigned when the primary function of the code-switch is to comment emphatically on an element in the other language. Arguably a subcategory of ‘commentary’.	<i>itane? nuntiat Brutus illum ad bonos uiros?</i> εὐαγγέλια. <i>sed ubi eos?</i> (CIC. <i>Att.</i> XIII.40)
Explanation	A switch of this type explains part of the text. Arguably a subcategory of ‘commentary’.	<i>inde iam non inurbane</i> σοφοκλεῖς <i>uocantur</i> ἀπὸ τοῦ σοφῶς καὶ καλεῖσθαι, <i>isdem</i> <i>Latinum nomen</i> <i>impositum est laudiceni</i> (PLIN. II.xiv.5)
Greek cultural sphere (GCS)	This category is used to describe those switches whose primary function appears to be to evoke the cultural associations of the Greek term. These terms often belong to spheres with a particularly close association with the Greeks or in which Greek vocabulary was more precise and extensive than Latin. For the subcategories, see Table 15 .	<i>rusticatio autem nostra mea</i> πολιτεία <i>prorsus negotium illud est ueitae togatae</i> (Fronto, VdH 103.20) (GCS: Politics/Law)
Greeting	Greetings are sometimes expressed in Greek. This is a common function of code-switching cross-linguistically, for which see the end of the chapter.	<i>Terentia delectata est tuis litteris; impertit tibi multam salutem,</i> καὶ Κικέρων ὁ φιλόσοφος τὸν πολιτικὸν Τίτον ἀσπάζεται (CIC. <i>Att.</i> 2.12.4)

Table 2 (*cont.*)

Functional category	Description	Example
Instruction /Request	This category is used where the primary function of the code-switch is to offer a directive or part of a directive phrase (analogous to Callahan's category 'Directives' (2004: 74)) or to make a request.	<i>cura igitur ut ualeas; aliquando ἀπότρισται quartam istam diligentia quae in te summa est</i> (CIC. <i>Att.</i> VII.5)
Insult/Mockery	This category is assigned where the primary function of the Greek is to insult or mock someone. This function is restricted to Suetonius, where it plays an important role: throughout the <i>Lives</i> , there are numerous examples of Greek being used to make criticisms of the emperor.	<i>ac ne cui haec mira sint, litigatori Graeculo uox in altercatione excidit: καὶ σὺ γέρων εἶ καὶ μωρός</i> (SUET. <i>Cl.</i> 15.4)
Metalinguistic	This category is used to describe switches that comment explicitly on use of language: it can include information on tone, accent, intent or effect.	<i>Bruto ita uolui scribere (sed, quoniam tu te legisse scribis, fui fortasse ἀσαφέστερος), me ex tuis litteris intellexisse nolle eum me quasi prosequendi sui causa Romam nunc uenire</i> (CIC. <i>Att.</i> XIII.25) (<i>continued</i>)

Table 2 (*cont.*)

Functional category	Description	Example
Naming	This category is assigned to switches whose primary function is to communicate or cite a Greek proper name. The specific type of name is specified: nickname, personal name, place name, song title, or title of work.	<i>sed ex dilectis unum, Masgaban nomine, quasi conditorem insulae</i> κτίστην <i>uocare consueuerat</i> (SUET. <i>Aug.</i> 98.4) (Naming: nickname)
Omen/ Prophecy	This function is assigned where Greek is used to deliver a prediction about the future.	<i>ante paucos quam occideretur menses cornix in Capitolio elocuta est:</i> ἔσται πάντα καλῶς, <i>nec defuit qui ostentum sic interpretaretur:</i> ‘ <i>Nuper Tarpeio quae sedit culmine cornix!</i> ’ “ <i>Est bene</i> ” <i>non potuit dicere, dixit: “Erit”</i> (SUET. <i>Dom.</i> 23.2)
Question	This category is assigned where the primary function of the switch appears to be interrogative.	<i>nam quod eam collaudavi apud amicos, audientibus tribus filiis eius et filia tua,</i> τί ἐκ τοῦ<τ>ου; (CIC. <i>Att.</i> xv.1)
Quotation	This category is assigned where the primary function of the code-switch appears to be to communicate information from another language verbatim (or lightly adapted). Quotations may be taken from written or spoken sources, and may be	<i>non quia non et ille mihi ualdissime placeat</i> παῦρα μὲν, ἀλλὰ μάλα λιγέως (PLIN. i.xx.22) (Quotation: literary (Homer))

Table 2 (*cont.*)

Functional category	Description	Example
	from literature or elsewhere. The sources/ types of quotations are as follows: imagined, inscription, literary, mock literary, oral, popular verse, proverb/ gnomic statement, rumour, self-quotation and song. In the case of quotations from literature and oral quotations of named characters, the author is also stated in the database. See Callahan 2004: 72 on the difficulties of assigning quotations and her criteria for doing so.	
Referential	This category is assigned where the code-switch advances the meaning of the text, but does not explicitly comment on or describe anything in the other language (Callahan 2004: 70–1) (Chapter 2).	<i>nec enim conquisitores</i> φαινοπροσωπεῖν <i>audent, cum ille adsit,</i> <i>contraque noster dux</i> <i>nusquam sit, nihil</i> <i>agat, nec nomina dant</i> (CIC. Att. VII.21)
Wordplay	Switches in this category are employed so that the author can engage in either wordplay that is internal to the Greek or bilingual wordplay that works only in conjunction with the Latin.	<i>nunc uero, quod a te</i> <i>probabata sunt,</i> <i>multo mi Ἀττικώτερά</i> <i>uidentur</i> (CIC. Att. I.13)

quotations as a subcategory of code-switching in modern analysis, some readers may raise the objection that quotations are not really comparable with other types of code-switching. One defence of following modern code-switching analysis on this matter would be to acknowledge that quotations need not be cited in the original, as we see clearly in Cicero's practice and comments (Chapter 3). In his *philosophica*, Greek terms are usually translated or explained and Greek quotations are translated, whereas they often appear in the original in the letters. In a letter to Paetus, Cicero cites a Greek quotation in Latin, but immediately remarks that 'this is better in Greek' (*Graece hoc melius*, *Fam.* 197.2) and that Paetus can translate it, if he wants. Here Cicero explicitly flags the fact that something is lost in translation: probably that the Greek verb has a double sense, which the equivalent Latin does not. If author and recipient in the epistolary context that admits code-switching both fully understand Greek and are happy to receive it, then translation is unnecessary, unless a point needs to be made, perhaps to an old-fashioned, conservative such as Paetus (Chapter 3). For skilled bilingual epistolographers, the use of direct quotation in Greek is always a choice.

Roman Epistolary Interactions

Roman letters, especially those in the somewhat artificially constructed *Epistel* category,⁴⁷ have recently seen a surge of interest resulting in copious output on a range of themes.⁴⁸ 'Letters' might at first glance seem to need no explanation, but on examination the category resists simple definition. Trapp's anthology of Greek and Latin letters opens with a statement that as long as we are not interested in aiming for a 'water-tight definition', then recourse to the following characteristics

⁴⁷ Roman letters have tended to be split into two sets: the carefully prepared, 'literary' *Episteln* of the major figures from the manuscript tradition (and occasionally inscribed into more substantial media) and the often unelaborated so-called *Briefe* on lead, wood, ceramic and papyrus involving correspondents from wider society. Both sets display code-switching.

⁴⁸ For example Adams 2003a; Beard 2002; Gibson 2012; Gibson and Morello 2012; Morello and Morrison 2007; Richlin 2006b; Swain 2002, 2004; Trapp 2003; White 2010; Wilcox 2012, all of which add to earlier work by, for example, Stowers 1986.

of a letter will usually suffice: (a) it is a written message from one person to another (or sets of people, for example in Saint Paul's letters), who are usually distant from one another; (b) it requires a tangible medium, which is physically conveyed; (c) it is addressed from sender to recipient using conventional epistolary formulae at the beginning and end; and (d) it is usually of relatively limited length.⁴⁹ Beyond these relatively straightforward features, which no doubt cover the vast majority of ancient letters, lies a wealth of written forms that flirt with the edges of the category and play at the boundaries, for example, letters which do not neatly fit the template, such as the verse letters of Ovid between mythical characters, and other writings such as Cicero's *De Officiis*, which are not usually labelled as letters, but could be.⁵⁰ From our point of view, the correspondence of Cicero, Pliny, Fronto and the letters cited in Suetonius do not really encourage us to worry about 'what is a letter?', since they fit neatly with what we instinctively think ancient (and modern) letters are and are referred to consistently as such.⁵¹ What they should do is to make us wonder about the nature of 'epistolarity',⁵² that is, to consider in what way the language used in letters creates and matches our expectations, and if it does not, how and why it does not. We might think about the ways in which letters overlap with and contain a range of genres, didactic prose and autobiography, for example, and the impact this has on the language of letters. To state that '[m]ixture is the letter, the epistle, which is not a genre but all genres, literature itself'⁵³ is not especially helpful, as there are ways in which epistolarity feels tangible and different from a general mix of genres, even if they are difficult to diagnose precisely. The *De Officiis*, Ovid's letters and the letters of Seneca do not fit neatly into the set of personal correspondence that we

⁴⁹ See Trapp 2003: 1.

⁵⁰ See Gibson and Morrison 2007: 9–13. As Trapp incisively remarks, '[m]uch depends on one's reasons for raising the question "is this a letter?" in the first place, and one's keenness to press issues of genre and definition' (2003: 1 n. 3).

⁵¹ See Gibson and Morrison 2007: 16 for the importance of authorial and/or editorial 'claims to epistolarity' in deciding whether a letter should be deemed a letter or not.

⁵² For 'epistolarity' based on cross-cultural analysis, see Altman 1982.

⁵³ Derrida 1987: 48.

treat in this volume, and the practice, or not, of code-switching within them may be one element in understanding why.

Ancient letter writing of the type produced by Cicero, Pliny and Fronto offers a range of registers and content, ranging from relatively quick-fire interactions on apparently relatively mundane matters when the time lag between sending and receiving seems minimal, to more unavoidably stuttering longer-distance communications, sometimes on matters of existential importance, but, as we have seen, despite the excuses, it rarely strays too far from literary standards and some letters reach the highest levels of polish and literary dexterity.⁵⁴ When we approach Roman elite epistolography, we are in the realm of collections of aristocratic letter-headed missives, and not (usually) that of scribbled notes.⁵⁵ Cicero occasionally presents the pretence of dashing off letters, but this is classic posturing from the consummate perfectionist, which we should not necessarily take too seriously: even when in a hurry, he takes great pride and care in his writing. For example, he opens a letter to Atticus with the excuse *subito cum mihi dixisset Caecilius quaestor puerum se Romam mittere, haec scripsi raptim*; ‘Because quaestor Caecilius has suddenly told me that he is sending a boy to Rome, I write this in haste’ (*Att.* 11.9.1),⁵⁶ but proceeds to write a long and detailed

⁵⁴ For the art of the letters, see Fleury 2006; Hutchinson 1998. Although Swain, for some contexts, may be correct in saying that letters are useful in that they come close to resolving a problem that besets modern sociolinguistic analysis, namely getting us towards unobserved speech (2002: 145), many of our letters are clearly not transcripts of free-flowing colloquialism (Chapter 2).

⁵⁵ White states that ‘[o]f all the literary forms that were current in the Roman period, the familiar letter appears to have altered least in the course of its descent to us’ (2010: 3) and yet fails to find a comparable oeuvre in ‘the great British and French epistolary collections’ (2010: viii). For a relatively recent collection of a not incomparable type, see the correspondence of Virginia Woolf, or, at further distance, the eighteenth-century letters of the tenth Earl of Pembroke and his circle, some of which contain code-switching into French (Pembroke 1942).

⁵⁶ Elite letter writers no doubt expended a fair amount of resources on couriering letters (official letters could be sent through the *cursus publicus*, with appropriate permission), but these might also be transferred via third parties who happened to be travelling in the right direction, or pre-prepared or hurriedly concocted in order to hand over an immediate reply to the correspondent’s courier for the return journey. Cicero grumbles that Cassius’ couriers would be more considerate were they to give him some space to write, *sed petasati ueniunt, comites ad portam expectare dicunt* ‘but they come dressed for the highway and say that their companions are waiting by the gate’ (*Fam.* 214.1). For the same problem in non-literary sources, see Peppard 2008.

letter, including copious code-switching and some Homeric quotations, and there seems to be no appreciable difference in style from his usual mode of writing to Atticus.

Despite brief peeks through the keyholes into the practicalities of daily letter writing amongst the Roman elite, often we do not have access to information about the precise context in which individual letters were written, and, given the range of possible options, we need to be cautious about making too many assumptions in our reconstructions. The details of the epistolary interaction, dictation, intentionality, spontaneity, autography, manuscript transmission, editorial reordering and script use may be lost. Indeed we must recognize the layers of intervention that can distort our view. None of the letters is the ‘original’. Instead we read them through the filter of ancient compilers, medieval copyists, modern editors, translators and anthologists. In some cases, this modern group can have a pervasive and underappreciated effect. It is hard to imagine, certainly in an Anglophone environment, a Cicero that has not been, at least partially, created by Shackleton Bailey. This scholar was, however, not a careful manuscript consultant and his vivid translations and confident editions and commentaries make decisions about context and content which are not always obvious from the text itself.⁵⁷ The key layer of subjective intervention is, however, our own as we approach the bilingualism of these letters as sociolinguists and ancient historians with biases in training, scholarly interactions, knowledge and outlook. Literary specialists and syntacticians, for example, might approach the same material in an entirely different way.

Endings of Letters: Beginnings of Comparative Explorations

Terentia delectata est tuis litteris; impertit tibi multam salutem, καὶ Κικέρων ὁ φιλόσοφος τὸν πολιτικὸν Τίτον ἀσπάζεται.

⁵⁷ See Thomas 2008.

Language and Life in Letters

Terentia was delighted by your letters: she warmly greets you, and Cicero the philosopher greets the politician Titus.

Letter from Cicero to Atticus, 59 BC (*Att.* 11.12.4)

Jeo prie a la benoit trinite que vous ottroic bone vie ovc tresentier sauntee a treslonge durré, and sende yowe sone to ows in help and prosperitee; for in good fey, I hope to almighty god that, yef ye come youre owne persone, ye schulle have the victorie of alle youre enemyes.

I pray to the blessed Trinity that you be granted good life with perfect health for a long time to come and may [the Trinity] send you to us soon in help and prosperity; for I faithfully pray to almighty God that, if you yourself come in person, you will be victorious over all your enemies.⁵⁸

Letter from Richard Kingston,
Dean of Windsor, to Henry IV, 1403

Zoudt gij mij aan het reisgeldje kunnen helpen kerel. Als 't maar 20 francs is dan zal ik er misschien van Pa nog wel 10 bij krijgen ("als 't ware buiten hem om; oogluikend") et alors je décampe plus vite que ça. As-tu compris mon cher! Crois moi toujours

T à T.

Would you be able to help me out with the travelling expenses, old chap? Even if it's only 20 francs, perhaps I'll get another 10 from Pa ('leaving him out of it, as it were; turning a blind eye') and then I'll clear off with no time to lose. Do you understand, my dear fellow! Believe me always

Ever yours.

Letter from Vincent Van Gogh to Theo Van Gogh, 1881 (number 183)⁵⁹

Code-switching has been used in epistolary closing greetings, and indeed throughout letters, for thousands of years, a reflection of our multilingual world, complex relationships and multiple identities. The examples above of closing greetings come from different contexts: the first from a first-century BC Roman elite household and a reflection of the warm-hearted gentle ribbing between close friends, the second a fifteenth-century letter from a senior member of the Church directly to the King about rebel incursions and the last from a lengthy letter from a struggling artist to his brother on the topic of his unrequited love for his cousin. Despite the obvious differences, all

⁵⁸ Translation from Gardner-Chloros 2009: 40.

⁵⁹ For the full text, translation, notes and images, see <http://vangoghletters.org/vg/letters/let183/letter.html> (last accessed 19 April 2018).

are linked by the use of code-switching. Switching languages allows the interlocutors in each epistolary pairing to tap into shared cultural and linguistic backgrounds in the construction of relationships and the expression of identities.

We will discuss the correspondence of Cicero to his most frequent correspondent in detail in [Chapter 3](#). The code-switching in the letter between Henry and Richard is interesting because it recalls the way that code-switching plays into wider issues of society, culture and politics in our ancient letter writers. The letter comes from a similar highly multilingual context to that of the Roman world. England was trilingual: Turville-Petre describes how English, French and Latin were in ‘a symbiotic relationship, interpenetrating and drawing strength from one another; not just three cultures but one culture in three voices’.⁶⁰ Around the time that this letter was written, there was, however, the beginning of a shift in the role and position of the English language and literature. The link between English and the monarchy in particular was strengthening: in 1391, Chaucer described the King as ‘lord of this language’.⁶¹ Following Henry IV’s coup over Richard II in 1399, four years before this letter was written, the new Lancastrian monarchy began to commission literary works in English that promoted and legitimized their rule.⁶²

Some of these dynamics can be seen in this letter. It is written primarily in French, the normal language of royal letters at this point, but peppered with code-switches into English, including in this closing greeting. Several commentators have remarked on the significance of the code-switch here. Schendl dismisses the idea that it is down to lexical need; he argues instead that it shows the ‘social acceptability’ of the strategy.⁶³ In a separate analysis, he argues that ‘the

⁶⁰ Turville-Petre 1996: 181. His work covers the period up to 1340, but the influence of these different languages continued: see, for example, Rothwell 1994 on ‘the trilingual England of Geoffrey Chaucer’ (who lived from c.1343 to 1400).

⁶¹ Geoffrey Chaucer, ‘Treatise on the astrolabe’.

⁶² English was promoted especially vigorously under Henry V, see Richardson 1980; Pearsall 1994: 390, 397–8, but there is some evidence of the beginnings of this policy under Henry IV; see Fisher 1992.

⁶³ Schendl 2000: 81.

lexis, especially nouns and verbs, establishes a close relation between the English and French passages': it therefore shows the 'dynamic' relationship between the two languages and is a reminder of the continuum of code-switching and borrowing that we discuss throughout this volume.⁶⁴ Wogan-Browne argues that the code-switching here is 'expressive' and sees a division between formality expressed via French and the 'urgency and intimacy' expressed via English.⁶⁵ The reference to the 'intimacy' of code-switching is striking, given that this is also often invoked as an explanation of ancient code-switching patterns; we will show its limitations in our analysis ([Chapter 3](#)). The wider political context of the role of English should, however, also be adduced in interpretations. Although the conventional prayer for life and health is in French, Kingston switches into English to make his appeal about the specific situation in hand. There may be an element of flattery in his prayer that Henry will 'have the victorie of alle youre enemys', which is presumably designed to persuade him to 'come youre own persone'. This flattery and persuasion is perhaps more effective in the language that the monarchy was increasingly keen to promote and associate with. The letter then provides a glimpse of the importance of historical context and language attitudes in understanding the way that code-switching is deployed to negotiate relationships and actions within letters, and also demonstrates the similarities of functions of code-switching over time and space. These are crucial to our reading of Greek within the ancient epistolary collections.

The letter from Vincent Van Gogh to his brother Theo was written in November 1881 in Etten, the Netherlands. Both were brought up in a middle-class Dutch family and Vincent relied on Theo for money to survive and as a confidant. Vincent knew Dutch, French and English well, following extended periods living in England and France, and read German. His letters are full of individuality and play with language, imagery and

⁶⁴ Schendl 2013: 47–8.

⁶⁵ Wogan-Browne 2009: 7.

image.⁶⁶ After moving to the south of France in the late 1880s, he wrote in French, in line with a change in persona, which included a new artistic identity and practice. Some of his earlier letters in Dutch, however, contain code-switching into French, which is sometimes extensive. One subject that seems to have triggered switches of language was love. In the midst of the pain of rejection of his unpopular proposal of marriage to his cousin Kee Vos, he writes a series of torrid letters, which switch between Dutch and French with palpable vigour and evident mental distress: '[s]hout[ing] and gesticulat[ing], he would plunge heedlessly into arguments, pouring out sentences in a wild mix of Dutch, English and French'.⁶⁷ At this point Vincent has not yet moved to France and is writing Dutch letters to his brother. Why code-switch into French? Dutch is the native tongue of the brothers and the language we might have expected to cope with emotional outbursts, but, as with Greek in the Roman letters, French may have added an additional dimension. It was no doubt seen as the language of romantic entanglements and drew attention to the important subject matter at hand. At the end of this letter to Theo, the use of French may have in addition lent a conspiratorial tone: the code could easily be cracked, of course, but it nevertheless demonstrated an in-group language which the brothers shared and that Vincent could use to underscore their close relationship and encourage his support. His brother, however, does not follow Vincent's code-switching, again indicating the importance of seeing the practice as context specific and the output of individuals, while also being alert to the wider cultural environment.

In this volume, we make detailed comparisons of code-switching across our ancient authors and compare it to the analysis of written code-switching of more recent periods. [Chapter 2](#) investigates the grammatical and functional nature of the code-switching over time in our authors and the interpretation of these features is informed by interaction with

⁶⁶ For a fascinating study of the multilingualism in the letters of Lucien Pissarro and Vincent Van Gogh, see Gardner-Chloros 2014.

⁶⁷ Naifeh and White Smith 2011: 511.

modern code-switching research. Although the diachronic (socio)linguistic analysis is important in its own right, we use it to think through an essential question which constantly preoccupies the study of code-switching material, ancient and modern: how oral is it? Our empirically based answers contribute a new dimension to the long-standing debate about how Roman elites may have displayed, or not, their bilingualism in everyday conversations. Constructing the *habitus* of bilingual writers permits us to discuss the norms, but also to understand better the exceptions and diversions, to reconstruct writers and societies, to recover meanings of passages, implicit and explicit and even, with care, to assess which textual variants may be more reliable.

The next two chapters explore the language of the letters in the Late Republic (Chapter 3) and Antonine period (Chapter 4) as a means by which to consider the building, sustaining, manipulation and evolution of relationships between peers and across social and hierarchical divides (sometimes stark, for example, in the case of the relations between Fronto and Marcus Aurelius, Lucius Verus, and Antoninus Pius). We add to debates on a range of socio-historical questions, arguing that by understanding the norms of code-switching in different authors and contexts we may create, however tentatively, a ‘code-switching fingerprint’ for some of the actors in our texts. This in turn may give a better understanding of political, educational and occupational relationships and strategies of communication (e.g. when norms are flouted) and may even help to identify the intended recipients. In these chapters, we investigate the authors’ creation and negotiation of spheres of communication (public–private, politics, education, philosophy and rhetoric) and key themes (*amicitia*, intimacy and power) and explore the construction of Romanness and the role that language plays within it.

Chapter 5 responds directly to the exploration of being Roman and its essential relationship with Greek linguistic and cultural competence. It expands the view by approaching material that embeds epistolary code-switching and combines it with Greek from multiple non-epistolary sources. Suetonius’

corpus is viewed as operating within continua of linguistic practices and attitudes, spanning and manipulating oral and written, public and private, formal and informal, individual and societal expectations. We enter into the debate about the nature of language and linguistic attitudes both through Suetonius' explicit commentary and his own practice, which encourages us to consider the 'ethnic' identity of words, linguistic authority and appropriateness of oral and written language. Suetonius' corpus, perhaps more than the letter collections themselves, may help us to capture epistolarity.

Bilingual elite letters are a powerful tool for exploring the changing nature of language, identities and culture. The online database of the code-switching in Roman letters, with the possibility of expansion both within and beyond letters, and the range of approaches still to be combined and tested, open numerous opportunities for future research. Detailed empirical investigations into the form and function of code-switching across different genres, authors and contexts allow us to explore code-switching in its sociolinguistic complexity and our investigations should be informed by cross-disciplinary interaction: [Chapter 2](#) begins the comparative exploration of our bilingual Roman epistolography.

CHAPTER 2

A ROMAN CONVERSATION? CODE-SWITCHING IN DIACHRONIC CONTEXT

Whereas Cicero's Greek presents all the characteristics of a real *Umgangssprache*, Pliny's is more artificial and tied to the literary tradition.¹

Rochette's comment reflects a scholarly view on code-switching in the two heavy-weights of Roman epistolography: Pliny's Greek is thought to be technical, carefully delimited and literary, whereas Cicero's, at least at times, is considered to be freer and representative of spoken language.² As a result, Cicero's Greek has attracted abundant responses in the socio-linguistic and historical domain (Chapter 3), whereas Pliny's has been comparatively overlooked.³ This chapter will interrogate these assumptions by using the evidence of code-switching systematically collected and examined across four authors and will assess change over time from Cicero to Fronto and beyond through a diachronic grammatical, syntactic and functional analysis.

The linguistic and functional analysis has value in its own right and, to our knowledge, this is the first time a comparison of the code-switching across the four authors has been published.⁴ But its value is magnified through interpretation, which helps

¹ Rochette 2010: 289.

² The nature of the dialectal forms of Greek in Cicero's case has recently been shown to be complex and contextually motivated; see O'Sullivan 2017 and pp. 106–7.

³ For short discussions on Pliny's Greek, see Deane 1918a, 1918b; Rochette 2013. For an excellent introduction to Pliny's letters, see Gibson and Morello 2012, who present a series of ways of reading the letters and four helpful appendices providing information on Pliny's life, contents and addressees of the letters, bibliographical help arranged topically, and main characters in the letters. The book-length treatments they list from 2000 onwards are: Beutel 2000; Carlon 2009; Gonzales 2003; Henderson 2002; Lefèvre 2009; Marchesi 2008; Méthy 2007; Wolff 2003.

⁴ In terms of linguistic analysis of code-switching, for Cicero, for example, there is a short article by Dunkel 2000 and comments in Adams 2003a; Swain 2002; Wenskus 1998. For Fronto, there is a preliminary study based on our data; see Mullen 2015, and some remarks in Wenskus 2003.

us to understand better both the details of the texts themselves and to contribute to debates about the nature of Roman elite society. This chapter builds an image of the nature of code-switching in our authors. This allows for the identification of divergences from the norms, which may in turn alert us to later interpolations, misreadings and corrections, point to improved interpretations of passages and help diagnose differences in the relationships between correspondent and addressees. The latter might even allow the identification of authors and processes of composition in the absence of secure direct information, potentially important for the Frontonian correspondence where there remains uncertainty over the authorship and recipients of various letters (Chapter 4). The investigation also compares modern oral and written code-switching data with the ancient material and contributes to key debates about written code-switching, ancient and modern, including the extent to which it can convey ‘orality’ by reflecting, consciously or subconsciously, spoken code-switching in both explicitly oral, and non-oral, passages. Our letters represent a continuum of language which ranges from the vernacular to contrived archaism, and the multifunctional nature of code-switching allows the authors to add, at times, a colloquial and, at others, an artificial tone. These discussions open the way for a new perspective on the nature of bilingual conversations amongst the Roman elite, which have thus far been considered through a relatively impressionistic approach to the evidence.

The Syntax and Grammar of Code-Switching: Norms, Constraints and Comparisons

The issues associated with securely identifying code-switching and, more generally, in the treatment of ancient texts (Chapter 1), make detailed syntactic and grammatical analysis of the code-switching in Roman correspondence problematic, though not impossible, and, now that the database is available, detailed comparative work can be attempted. Although a large proportion of research into modern, and to a lesser

extent medieval,⁵ code-switching has focused on modelling intra-sentential examples and the identification of linguistic constraints, classicists so far have been less interested in pursuing these lines of enquiry, partly owing to the restrictions of our evidence, but also perhaps because Adams, the most influential commentator on ancient bilingualism, has been dismissive about the prospects: '[i]t seems to me perverse that some linguists have shown a desire to establish "universal" constraints on code-switching when there is as yet so little empirical data available about a practice which is undoubtedly familiar all over the world'.⁶ Modern linguists may feel similarly frustrated by the apparent loss of direction in studies of code-switching: there seem to be endless discussions of 'universal' models and constraints, though many ultimately concede that, given counter-examples and the lack of consensus, the work cannot propose strict rules, but rather strong tendencies.⁷ An empirically based analysis of the grammatical and syntactic dimensions of code-switching in Roman epistolography is of use, not for the endless revision of, and addition to, linguistic models and constraints on code-switching, but as a way of understanding the linguistic norms of code-switching, developments across time and context and in identifying 'code-switching fingerprints' for individual authors.

Research into modern written code-switching and its relationship with the, as yet, much better examined oral practice has not yet reached a consensus on which aspects of written code-switching can be seen as matching oral, and whether any can be diagnosed as exclusively a feature of writing. In 1982 Lipski highlighted the creativity of code-switching in poetry and argued that 'many, if not most examples – particularly in bilingual poetry – represent configurations that would be most unlikely to occur spontaneously in unreflective speech'.⁸ In subsequent research into modern oral and written code-switching between English and Assyrian in the United States, McClure

⁵ For medieval code-switching, see Schendl and Wright 2011.

⁶ Adams 2003a: 298.

⁷ For a discussion, see Gardner-Chloros 2009: 91–114; Muysken 2000: 27–9.

⁸ Lipski 1982: 192–3.

Parts of Speech Employed in Code-Switching

remarked that ‘oral codeswitching has both a wider range of form than written codeswitching and also a wider range of functions’.⁹ Her research was based, at least in part, on a corpus where the two languages are represented by different scripts written in opposite directions, posing no doubt some practical issues not relevant for oral switching. More recent work by Callahan on the code-switching in Spanish–English US texts argued that there are no significant differences between code-switching in speech and writing in terms of functional scope or grammatical constraints, though Myers-Scotton’s Matrix Language Framework (MLF), designed for oral content, did not completely hold for the dialogue sections of her US Spanish–English corpus.¹⁰ A good deal more comparative work remains to be done and these differences of opinion are no doubt in part a result of research on data sets from varied contexts. Given the current interest in written code-switching amongst modern sociolinguists, in this, and future, work we have an opportunity to continue to elaborate and compare our findings through cross-cultural and diachronic studies.¹¹

Parts of Speech Employed in Code-Switching

The following grammatical and syntactic discussion is based on information from our database for the switches in epistolary contexts in Cicero’s *Ad Familiares*, Pliny, Suetonius and Fronto and in non-epistolary contexts in Suetonius. The grammar and syntax of the Ciceronian letters *Ad Atticum* have already received some treatment in the scholarship,¹² most recently by Jackson (2014), who responded to Adams’ comment that ‘[m]uch remains to be done on Ciceronian code-switching ... a statistical survey of the parts of speech and inflectional forms admitted might be revealing’.¹³ Use is made of this research where possible.

⁹ McClure 2001: 188.

¹⁰ See Callahan 2004: 69.

¹¹ See Gardner-Chloros and Weston 2015 and Chapter 1.

¹² See some brief comments in Adams 2003a; Swain 2002; Wenskus 1998, and a short article by Dunkel 2000.

¹³ Adams 2003a: 345.

In order to perform an analysis of the grammatical composition of code-switching, first the examples of literary quotations and proverbs were excluded (we refer to the remaining examples as ‘non-literary-quotational’ code-switches). However, we retained quotations from contemporary authors where they are explicitly identified as oral or epistolary quotations, or likely to be, for example numerous instances probably derived from Atticus’ letters in Cicero’s output. Although literary quotations are viewed by us as examples of code-switching (see [Chapter 1](#) and the discussion below), they should not be included in this analysis of the parts of speech employed in code-switching as they are not directly from the oral or epistolary realm. In our figures we also exclude inter-sentential switches (a switch in languages between sentence or clause boundaries, many of which are in fact literary quotations, for which see below) as these work as stand-alone sections of Greek and are less relevant for thinking about the linguistic norms in code-switching practices.

We begin with Pliny whose code-switching, as we have seen, is thought to be artificial and not as close to the vernacular as that of Cicero. Pliny code-switches in intra-sentential (within the sentence or clause boundary) and non-literary-quotational form seventy-six times. Examples from Trajan’s letters have not been included in this figure.¹⁴ Only eight times does the Plinian switch entail more than a single word. Of these eight, which are set out in [Table 3](#), example 1 is likely to be a post-Plinian addition to the text: the explanatory Greek gloss on σοφοκλέϊς is unique in our assessment of the functions of Greek code-switches, and thus we can be relatively confident in supporting Sherwin-White’s view that this is probably a later editorial intervention;¹⁵ examples 3 and 5 are parts of book titles,¹⁶ and therefore perhaps to be seen as fixed phrases; example 6 may be part of a quotation, leaving very scant evidence for anything other than single-word switches in Pliny’s

¹⁴ They total seven examples, comprising three adjectives and four nouns.

¹⁵ Sherwin-White 1966: 182.

¹⁶ See Henriksson 1956 for Greek book titles in Roman literature.

Table 3 *Examples of intra-sentential, non-literary-quotational code-switches above the level of the single word in Pliny's correspondence*

	Reference (OCT)	Date	Addressee	Citation of Greek code-switch	Latin context
1.	II.xiv.5	Pre-98, January, or post-100, October	Maximus	ἀπο τοῦ σοφῶς καὶ καλεῖσθαι	<i>inde iam non inurbane σοφοκλεῖς uocantur ἀπὸ τοῦ σοφῶς καὶ καλεῖσθαι, isdem Latinum nomen impositum est laudiceni</i>
2.	VI.xxii.2	106–107	Calestrius Tiro	κατὰ κεφάλαιον	<i>egit uterque pro se, egit autem carptim et κατὰ κεφάλαιον, quo genere ueritas statim ostenditur</i>
3.	VI.xxxiii.11	106–107	Voconius Romanus	ὑπὲρ Κτησιφῶντος	<i>in summa solent quidam ex contubernalibus nostris existimare hanc orationem iterum dicam ut inter meas ὑπὲρ Κτησιφῶντος esse</i>
4.	VII.xii.2	107	Falco	ὁμεῖς γὰρ οἱ εὐζηλοι	<i>ὁμεῖς γὰρ οἱ εὐζηλοι optima quaeque detrahitis</i>
5.	VII.xxx.5	107	Iulius Genitor	κατὰ Μειδίου	<i>qui libellos meos de ultione Heluidi orationi Demosthenis κατὰ Μειδίου confers</i>
6.	IX.xxiii.5	106–108	Maximus	οὗτός ἐστι Δημοσθένης	<i>an si Demosthenes iure laetatus est, quod illum anus Attica ita noscitauit: οὗτός ἐστι Δημοσθένης, ego celebritate nominis mei gaudere non debeo?</i>

(continued)

Table 3 (*cont.*)

	Reference (OCT)	Date	Addressee	Citation of Greek code-switch	Latin context
7.	x.x.I	98–102	Trajan	νομοῦ Μεμφίτου	<i>esse autem Arpocran νομοῦ Μεμφίτου indico tibi</i>
8.	x.xv	109–112?	Trajan	ὑπὲρ Μαλέαν	<i>quia confido, domine, ad curam tuam pertinere, nuntio tibi me Ephesum cum omnibus meis ὑπὲρ Μαλέαν nauigasse quamuis contrariis uentis retentum</i>

writing. As Table 4 demonstrates, Pliny's single word switches are overwhelmingly composed of nouns, in fact three-quarters of all examples are single noun switches. The remaining parts of speech are not well attested, with the second most frequent being single adjectives at 9 per cent and the third prepositional phrases at 7 per cent.¹⁷ A striking aspect of this switching is that verbal forms are very rare, with only two cases of single word verbal switches. The first of these occurs in a letter to Cornelianus dated to 106–107: *dein conuersus ad nos*: 'ἐπιστήσατε *quid facere debeamus*; *isti enim queri uolunt quod sibi licuerit non accusari*' 'Then he turned to us: "Consider what we ought to do. These men want to complain that they were allowed not to be charged"'¹⁸ (VI.xxxi.12). The words are in fact an oral quotation from the emperor Trajan. The second, from a few years later, is written to Trajan and is one of several letters between the pair that, in discussing rewards for successful athletes, repeatedly contain forms of εἰσελάυνω printed in our editions in both Latin and Greek script. In a difficult passage from a textual perspective,¹⁹ Pliny wonders *an sit potius id tempus, quo εἰσῆλασαν, intuendum* 'whether the timing of their entrance should rather be the focus' (x. cxviii.1). On this evidence, it looks as if single verbal switches barely feature in Pliny's own code-switching. Even when we look for verbs in the switches above the single word level, they only occur twice: in examples 1 and 6 in Table 3, the first of which is likely not a Plinian output and the second an oral quotation presumably to be attributed to the *anus* in Attica rather than Pliny himself.

The material in the database demonstrates starkly the non-verbal nature of Pliny's epistolary code-switching. An immediate reaction to this may be to remark on the ease with which

¹⁷ All are prepositions plus single nouns, with the exception of the dubious example 1 in Table 3.

¹⁸ Translations in this chapter are the authors' own, unless published versions are particularly appropriate, in which case the source is credited.

¹⁹ Sherwin-White notes that this letter and the next were rescued 'from a sad state of confusion partly due to the failure of an early editor or copyist to understand the somewhat condensed arguments' (1966: 728–9).

Table 4 *Instances of parts of speech in the intra-sentential, non-literary-quotational code-switches in selected sources*

Parts of speech	Pliny: correspondence	Fronto: correspondence	Suetonius: Augustus' epistolary switches	Suetonius: non-epistolary switches	Cicero: <i>Ad Familiares</i>
Adjective	7	10	6	12	17
Adjectival phrase	0	0	0	0	1
Adverb	1	0	3	0	3
Adverbial phrase	0	1	0	0	0
Clause	1	7	3	4	0
Nominal phrase	2	25	2	6	13
Noun	57	46	4	54	40
Participle	1	0	0	0	1
Prepositional phrase	5	5	1	0	4
Verb	2	5	3	4	8
Verbal phrase	0	4	1	0	1
<i>Total</i>	<i>76</i>	<i>103</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>80</i>	<i>88</i>

nouns can be switched between languages, even by those who are not proficient bilinguals. Verbal forms often require much more negotiation between the languages. But before we hurry to the conclusion that Pliny's code-switching is not that of a proficient code-switcher, we need to make a comparison with the nature of other Roman authors' code-switching and modern code-switching, together with a consideration of the context and types of nouns involved.

When we turn to the analysis of 103 intra-sentential, non-literary-quotational Frontonian code-switches, from both Marcus Aurelius (hereafter Marcus) and Fronto,²⁰ we recognize a roughly similar pattern to that in Pliny's correspondence, in that nouns are again the most prominent and verbal forms relatively infrequent (Table 4). But beyond that, some differences are immediately apparent: in the Plinian correspondence, only 11 per cent are not single-word switches, whereas in the Frontonian correspondence it climbs to 41 per cent. Within the latter correspondence, the two main authors, Marcus and Fronto, show no sharp difference in their practice in this regard, with the switches above the level of the single word accounting for 48 per cent and 36 per cent of their examples respectively.

When we interrogate the examples further, we find that verbal forms seem to receive a greater role than in the Plinian switching. Verbs and verbal phrases comprise 9 per cent of the switching, and when we investigate the examples, we can see that, with the exception of ἡρμόσθαι (VdH 157.2) and ὀνοματοποιεῖν (VdH 45.19), which are infinitive forms used for the citation of Greek terms for Latin versions just given, they are all in indicative: ὑπεκρίναμην (VdH 10.5); ζηλοτυπῶ (VdH 68.5); καὶ ἀντιβολῶ καὶ δέομαι καὶ <ι>κετεύω (VdH 77.10–11); <ἐγώ> θαρήσω τοῖς βεβουλευμένοις (VdH 96.6); χρήζω γὰρ ἀναπαύλης (VdH 105.15); εὐηγγελίσατο (VdH 63.23) or imperative mood: καὶ ἔλπιζε καὶ εὐθύμει καὶ χρόνῳ καὶ ἐμπειρίᾳ

²⁰ The one example of an intra-sentential, non-literary-quotational code-switch not from either of these authors is from Lucius Verus and comprises a nominal phrase expressing a book title: *an igitur debeas, quomodo* πεντηκονταετίαν Θουκυδίδης *explicit, illa omnia corripere* (VdH 108.27).

πειθου (VdH 50.5). Of seven code-switches containing indicative and imperative examples, all but two contain first-person forms. This might seem to imply, at least for these instances, a more personal, more immediate use of Greek language in the Frontonian correspondence than in Pliny's, a hypothesis to which we shall return.

Twenty-seven examples of code-switches in letters are cited in Suetonius' oeuvre, of which all but one are intra-sentential. Of the twenty-seven, twenty-three are described as the words of Augustus (Table 4).²¹ The distribution of parts of speech across Augustus' code-switching does not seem to reflect the preference for nominal over verbal forms seen in the Plinian and Frontonian correspondence discussed above, with more single-word adjectives than any other category, but the total number of code-switches in the table is low, with examples thinly spread over eight different parts of speech.

It is difficult to interpret the Suetonian epistolary data in Table 4, given the low numbers, and given the special position of these code-switches as the supposed words of the letters of Augustus embedded within the narrative (Chapter 5). The Suetonian practice may become clearer in the eighty intra-sentential, non-literary-quotational code-switches from the rest of the Suetonian corpus (Table 4). Here a clear preference can be seen for single-word switches (88 per cent) and the adjectival and nominal single switches outweigh the verbal at sixty-six to four. Though we are still dealing with small numbers, this assessment would place the Suetonian switches closer to the Plinian than the Frontonian. We could assume that this similarity between the Suetonian and Plinian practice may simply be a result of their contemporaneity and that they follow the bilingual practices of their time. But there are alternative explanations. The Plinian bilingual practice reflects the expectations of language use in epistolary relations between Roman elites of close, but not, on the whole, intimate relations and of material that was, at least in part, destined

²¹ The remaining examples are two Ciceronian at *Gram. et rhet.* 14 and one attributed to Lucius Ateius Philologus at *Gram. et rhet.* 10.

Parts of Speech Employed in Code-Switching

Table 5 *Jackson's figures for parts of speech in the single-word, non-quotational Ciceronian code-switches in Ad Atticum*

Parts of speech	No. of instances
Adjective	141
Noun	251
Verb	60
Other	75
<i>Total</i>	<i>527</i>

for publication.²² Similarly, the Suetonian output is for elites talking about elites in a medium intended for dissemination and, again, reflects and manipulates two languages in a mode appropriate for this context.²³ Fronto's correspondence with Marcus operates partly in the same context, but the close nature of their relationship and the probable lack of preparation for publication (Chapter 4), we could argue, might account for the slightly different complexion of code-switching, with more verbal forms and fewer single-word switches adding to the more personal and conversational ambiance. A comparison with the bilingualism of Cicero's letters may help to investigate these trends and interpretations further.

²² The bulk of Pliny's letters were published during his lifetime, perhaps from AD 104/105, with the exception of Book 10, which contains letters by both Pliny (73) and Trajan (50) and gives the impression of less finessing for publication. We are dealing with material that has been edited by Pliny expressly for publication as he states in the short opening letter of the collection to Septicius Clarus: *frequenter hortatus es ut epistulas, si quas paulo curatius scripsissem, colligerem publicaremque. collegi non servato temporis ordine (neque enim historiam componebam), sed ut quaeque in manus uenerat* (1.1.1) 'you have often encouraged me to collect and publish my letters, if I had written any with a little more care. I have collected them without preserving them in chronological order (I wasn't composing a history), but as they came to hand'. As a result we know that Pliny was happy for others to read the bulk of the collection we have, possibly with the exception of book 10, though the extent to which post-original letter editing has occurred cannot be reconstructed and Pliny's own words do not necessarily imply extensive authorial revision processes.

²³ See Chapter 5 for detailed discussion of the Suetonian context.

Jackson (2014) presents an analysis of the parts of speech used in non-quotational, single-word code-switches in the letters by Cicero to Atticus. She notes that she considers ‘an instance of Greek to be any of those words and phrases that D. R. Shackleton Bailey prints in Greek characters in his editions of the letters’,²⁴ and so adopts the same (not unproblematic) approach taken in the creation of our Ciceronian data (see Chapter 3).

In Jackson’s reckoning 69 per cent of the 760 non-quotational code-switches from Cicero’s letters *Ad Atticum* are single-word switches and, of these, 11 per cent are verbal (Table 5).²⁵ Although the figures are not exactly comparable to those presented in the other tables above since inter-sentential switches seem to have been included in Jackson’s calculation of the percentage of single-word versus non-single-word switches, the figures tally more closely with the Frontonian norms than the Plinian/Suetonian. Jackson also notes a feature that we have already seen in the Frontonian letters, namely, a preference for first-person verbal forms. 55 per cent of the Greek verbal forms are in the first person or, if infinitives, are complements of first-person verbs, as opposed to only 18 per cent and 29 per cent in second and third persons respectively.²⁶ Jackson foresees the potential criticism that this may be owing simply to a general bias towards first-person interaction in letter writing, so samples 850 Latin verbs from across the same corpus and notes a different distribution: first person 40 per cent; second person 15 per cent; third person 45 per cent.²⁷ Jackson opines that ‘Greek verbs often appear in contexts in which Cicero is trying to make a decision’,²⁸ a deliberative strategy using Greek which will be explored in Chapter 3.

The general context of the epistolography may align the Frontonian and Ciceronian corpora: the intensity of the relationships between Fronto and Marcus and between Cicero and Atticus, together with the probable lack of a publication

²⁴ Jackson 2014: 9.

²⁵ Jackson sets out the figures at 2014:10–24, though not in tabular form and does not present the breakdown for the parts of speech other than adjective, noun and verb.

²⁶ Jackson 2014: 10.

²⁷ Jackson 2014: 10.

²⁸ Jackson 2014: 10.

plan, are obvious linking factors. One question is whether there might be any differences in this aspect of bilingual practice between the letters to Cicero's apparently favourite correspondent and his letters written to the Roman elite more broadly. Of course, treating any collection of letters to multiple recipients as a coherent set is problematic and Cicero clearly has varied relationships with his *familiares*, and indeed a small number of the switches (twenty) are in fact those of the *familiares* themselves, but the figures for individual recipients would be too small to assess with any degree of confidence and it is not an unreasonable assumption that most of the recipients in the *Ad Familiares* do not share quite the same closeness of relationship with Cicero as does Atticus. [Chapter 3](#), however, shows us the problems with making such simplistic assumptions about our actors and underscores the importance of precise context, so we must use this analysis only in a most cautious manner.

In the *Ad Familiares*, 78 per cent of switches are single word, which is higher than the figure from the letters to Atticus, 69 per cent, and the Frontonian correspondence, which reaches 59 per cent. The figure for the percentage of verbs or verbal phrases, however, is similar to that for the Frontonian correspondence at 10 per cent, though they do not follow the same preference for first-person forms, with six infinitives, none of which is dependent on a first-person form, two third-person forms and one first-person form. The relative lack of first-person verbal forms may be a relevant difference in the letters to friends other than Atticus, perhaps hinting at the less consistently close personal relations and more restrictions on personal deliberation. The *Ad Familiares* fit better with the Plinian and Suetonian code-switching in terms of percentage of non-single-word switches and, though the verbal switching may be slightly more frequent, it does not show the preference for first-person forms as seen in the Attican and Frontonian correspondence. Perhaps in the linguistic patterning we might see a subtle reflection of different relationships: that is, less public and more intimate interactions between Atticus and Cicero, and between Marcus and Fronto, compared to a conversation with the 'elite' more broadly in the corpus of Pliny,

Suetonius and the *Ad Familiares*. This analysis, however, functions at a general level, and should not be taken as providing anything other than broad trends, within which more sophisticated, close analysis can operate. The relations between specific authors and topic have an impact on this and other aspects of code-switching which can only be explored through closer analysis (Chapters 3–5).

One of the largest studies of written code-switching to date is Callahan's analysis of 2,954 pages of American fictional prose, published between 1970 and 2000 and containing Spanish–English code-switching. It provides us with an opportunity to compare the bilingual practice we have identified in a not dissimilar volume of Roman texts. In these American texts the parts of speech involved in the switches are not much different from our Roman distribution: nouns again dominate in the composition, with nouns and nominal phrases adding up to 54 per cent and verbal forms totalling only just over 2 per cent (Table 6). The total number of single-word switches in the collection is 4,559, which is 68 per cent, and mirrors very closely the *Ad Atticum* pattern.

Although we cannot compare the materials from two millennia apart too closely, Callahan's results, which are based on prose with a significant percentage of representations of dialogue and oral-style narrative,²⁹ do seem to fit the pattern, in general terms, that we see in Roman epistolography, showing a preference for single-word switches and nominal rather than verbal constructions. In turn, as Callahan remarks, her results 'conform to the general profile revealed in studies of oral codeswitching (cf. Pfaff 1979: 293),³⁰ as well as in one of the few studies of written codeswitching to offer such a tabulation (McClure 1998).³¹ The dominance of switches at the level of single nouns and NPs is unchallenged.'³²

²⁹ See Callahan 2004: 69.

³⁰ As Poplack remarks 'single nouns ... have been found to be the most frequently switched' (1980: 589).

³¹ McClure 1998: 133, table 1 shows figures for Spanish–English written single noun code-switching in her corpora from Mexico and Spain at 69 per cent and 77 per cent of the totals respectively.

³² Callahan 2004: 49; see also Gardner-Chloros 2009: 30.

Parts of Speech Employed in Code-Switching

Table 6 *Instances of parts of speech in the intra-sentential code-switches of Callahan's corpus of US fictional prose (1970–2000) containing Spanish–English code-switching (based on Callahan 2004: table 3.1)**

Parts of speech	No. of instances
Adjective	296
Adjectival phrase	118
Adverb	91
Adverbial phrase	180
Clause	573
Conjunction	214
Interjection**	1294
Nominal phrase	1014
Noun	2586
Preposition	7
Prepositional phrase	163
Verb	71
Verbal phrase	90
<i>Total</i>	<i>6697</i>

* Quotations are included in this analysis, unlike in ours, though the low number of examples in Callahan's corpus (3 per cent; see below) means that any effect is minimal.

** This category includes vocatives, expletives, discourse markers and some exclamations (Callahan 2004: 79), and therefore sits slightly uncomfortably in this table. As Callahan notes: '[i]nterjections, which have a considerable representation in my data, are not a specific category in previous syntactic studies' (2004: 79).

The broad similarity of the linguistic content of the switches in our texts, especially the Ciceronian/Frontonian, with the written and oral code-switching of the modern world allows us to draw some tentative conclusions. Given that none of the oral or written modern examples in these studies uses Roman epistolography as a model, we can suggest that the recurring

use of code-switching to heighten and reflect orality seen in modern material is a strategy that may also have been employed in these ancient letters.³³ The modern studies remind us that the majority of assessed material consists of nominal code-switched terms and that using nouns from another language in itself should not be automatically seen as the mark of a lack of proficiency or a kind of ‘basic mode’. In assessing bilingual competence, it is important to consider the linguistic content (for example, the specific words that are used) and the broader context (pp. 61–2).

Montes-Alcalá, referring to work on modern code-switching, remarks that ‘[a] recurring thread in most of the previous studies is the issue of the authenticity of literary CS and to what extent it differs from natural language production’.³⁴ In some sense, it is pointless to ask if written texts are ‘authentic’ direct representations of spontaneous speech, they never can be, but it *is* helpful to think about notions of ‘realism’ in our letters and how code-switching can serve to construct the immediacy and piquancy of the dialogue. Code-switching, as in modern texts, may be used as one strand in the evocation of the ‘language of everyday’ that can add to the range of rhetorical strategies at the fingertips of the Roman epistolographer and it would only work if those engaged in the elite discourse understood it, not as a linguistic aberration, but as a possible feature of their own speech, which could serve several functions in select registers of writing. We return at the end of the chapter to probe further the relationship between epistolographic code-switching, rhetoric and ‘orality’.

Syntactic Dimension of Code-Switching

For linguists it is not only the content of the switches themselves, but also the way in which they fit with the other language(s) of the text, that attract attention. A linguistic analysis of the

³³ For the importance of code-switching in heightening the orality of a text, see Gardner-Chloros and Weston 2015: 186.

³⁴ Montes-Alcalá 2015: 266.

latter is long overdue for Roman epistolographers, and the following account provides evidence for the discussion of the relationship between code-switching in Roman letters and elite oral conversation.

Inter- and Intra-sentential Switching

Code-switches have been subdivided linguistically in numerous ways over the last half-century, sometimes using inconsistent terminology. We chose a relatively straightforward division which seems to respond well to the material, that between *inter-sentential switching* (a switch in languages between sentence or clause boundaries) and *intra-sentential switching* (a switch within the sentence or clause boundary).³⁵ In the majority of cases, it is clear which code-switches fit into which category, although some examples caused hesitation, which was not helped by textual lacunae and the absence of contemporary punctuation. In Fronto's correspondence, for example, we find a letter from Fronto to Marcus with the following two switches:

audias τί τὸ πρῶτον; τί τὸ δεύτερον; *diu multumque numerari*: εἰ ἡμέρα ἐστίν, φῶς ἐστίν, *fenestris patentibus laborari*. (VdH 151.22–151.23)

You may hear 'what is the first premise, what is second' repeated at length, the point 'if it is day, it is light' laboured with the windows open.

It is not immediately obvious whether these two switches ought to be seen as inter-sentential, that is, Greek philosophical quotations dropped into the discourse and in distinct direct speech, or intra-sentential. On scrutiny, the syntax suggests an intra-sentential analysis: Latin *audias* introduces an accusative and infinitive construction (*numerari*, *laborari*), with the Greek quotations standing in the place of the expected accusative. It might not be the most comfortable embedding of code-switches, but if the quotations had been in Latin we might have expected the same result.

³⁵ See Poplack 1980 for the terminology, also Mullen 2013a: 74–94. Some scholars use 'code-switching' to refer to 'inter-sentential switching', and 'code-mixing' for 'intra-sentential switching'; see Muysken 2000: 1.

A separate category of *tag-switching* did not appear to be relevant for any of the correspondence, in contrast to its use by Adams and others for describing code-switching in the ancient world in, for example, funerary epitaphs.³⁶ Intra-sentential code-switches were also not subdivided, for example following Muysken (2000), in order to avoid the straitjacket of any particular detailed grammatical model and because it is not clear how useful the subcategorization of types would be for the themes addressed in this volume. Instead the parts of speech and syntax involved in the code-switches are described in the database under the heading ‘Syntactic and grammatical information’ and the surrounding Latin is given under ‘Latin context’.

The majority of the code-switching of the epistolographers analysed in the database is intra-sentential. When including every example of code-switching in the authors, and not excluding literary quotations, the percentage of examples of inter-sentential switching reaches 27 per cent across Pliny’s correspondence, in part reflecting his high use of literary quotations, which are often cited in a syntactically independent fashion (see below). Only around 11 per cent of the examples in Fronto’s correspondence might be classed as inter-sentential (Chapter 4). This figure tallies again with the Ciceronian correspondence, where the inter-sentential switches reach 8 per cent in the letters to Atticus, 13 per cent in those to friends and 15 per cent for Quintus (Chapter 3). The inter-sentential switches in Suetonius’ corpus as a whole amount to 22 per cent and would fit somewhere between the letters to Quintus and Plinian code-switching;³⁷ however, the examples in epistolographic context within Suetonius’ text show a different distribution, with only one inter-sentential example in twenty-seven. The citations of letters by Suetonius include very few examples of quotations of Greek literary texts, which may explain the low levels of inter-sentential switching, with the only example being a quotation from *Iliad* 10.246–7.

³⁶ See Adams 2003a.

³⁷ Twenty-seven ‘inter’; three ‘inter?’; 105 ‘intra’ and four ‘intra?’.

Again modern code-switching research may provide material for comparative discussion. Callahan's corpora seem to contain inter-sentential code-switching at around 9 per cent, based on our calculations from her data, and match the Ciceronian/Frontonian pattern relatively well.³⁸ McClure's figures for Spanish–English written code-switching in Mexico and Spain offered figures for inter-sentential examples at 7 per cent and 1 per cent respectively.³⁹ It is, however, not always easy to find useful comparative data from modern studies on this matter. Many authors, especially those working on oral code-switching, do not use the same terminology, or exclude single switches, and do not include their data for others to manipulate.

The interpretation of the inter-/intra-sentential examples is more difficult than their identification. When we are dealing with competent, and not restricted, code-switching,⁴⁰ it is generally thought that intra-sentential switching requires greater competence than inter and that intra will always be accompanied by inter but not vice versa.⁴¹ Inter-/intra-sentential code-switching can be related to speakers' and interlocutors' attitudes, their age, their gender, the role of linguistic varieties in the community, the origins of the community, the attitude of

³⁸ Callahan (2004) notes on p. 47 that only intra-sentential switches are included in her tabulation by syntactic category and these add up to 6,697; later on p. 75 she notes there are 7,366 functional tokens in her database. If we take this latter number as the total number of switches, then 669 switches must be inter-sentential. Montes-Alcalá's corpus of code-switching in the modern Spanish–English writing of Californian bilingual youths shows a high percentage of inter-sentential switching, at around 30 per cent (2000: 225), but this evidence should be viewed cautiously: the subjects were shown fairy tales in code-switching mode and then were asked to write stories mixing their two languages.

³⁹ McClure 1998: 132–3.

⁴⁰ For the distinction between bilingual code-switching (associated with balanced bilinguals) and restricted code-switching (associated with dominant bilinguals), see Hamers and Blanc 2000: 267. Unfortunately, it is not always possible to distinguish between the two in textual evidence; see Adams 2003a: 305–8 for some examples. Our epistolographic code-switching is, however, clearly of the former type.

⁴¹ Hamers and Blanc refer to intra-sentential switching as 'a maturational social process' which children learn later 'since it requires full development of syntactic rules for both languages' (2000: 267). Auer notes that 'whenever intrasentential code-switching occurs, intersentential switching is a matter of course, but not all code-switching situations/communities which allow intersentential switching also allow intrasentential switching' (1998b: 3).

the community to code-switching, to name just a few factors.⁴² Often several elements will be involved and contextualization is vital to determine these. Generally, intra-sentential is regarded as the most intimate form of code-switching, and tag-switching, the most emblematic form of inter-sentential switching, the least.⁴³ For instance, in the case of Puerto-Rican residents of the stable Spanish–English bilingual community of El Barrio, New York City, who can choose between the two types, an ‘in-group’ interlocutor encourages the former and a ‘non-group’ interlocutor the latter.⁴⁴ Poplack argues that intra-sentential switching should be seen as a ‘discourse mode’, and that what is significant for sociolinguistics is not the exact position of the switch points, which can be relatively random, but rather the fact that the speakers have chosen to use this mode.⁴⁵ Indeed, in some communities, intra-sentential switching is a completely natural and expected choice (some linguists term this ‘unmarked’, for which see [Chapter 3](#)).⁴⁶

Given the nature of communities producing high levels of intra-sentential code-switching, the practice has tended to become synonymous with close-knit communities and intimate relations. For the ancient world, Adams has noted that code-switching ‘particularly of the “intra-sentential” type, has been said to carry a high degree of “syntactic risk”, and in consequence to be avoided by all but the most fluent bilinguals’.⁴⁷ But he notes that making generalizations about the ‘in-group’ nature of certain types of code-switching betrays the complexity of our ancient material,⁴⁸ as it does, of course, the modern. The notion of the in-group, whilst certainly helpful,

⁴² See Gardner-Chloros 2009, especially 42–64.

⁴³ Poplack describes emblematic code-switching as involving ‘tags, interjections, idiomatic expressions, and even individual noun switches’ (1980: 614).

⁴⁴ See Poplack 1980: 589–90. Poplack’s analysis of the factors underlying different types or absence of code-switching is somewhat general due to the small number of informants.

⁴⁵ Poplack 1980: 614.

⁴⁶ Myers-Scotton 2006: 167. Code-switching may also be ‘unconscious’. Code-switchers may not be aware that they have switched, and may not be able to report when and why they switched languages; see Wardhaugh 1998: 103.

⁴⁷ Adams 2003a: 297–8.

⁴⁸ See, for example, Adams 2003a: 303.

particularly when originally formulated by the anthropologist Gumperz at a time when the sociolinguistics of code-switching was in its infancy,⁴⁹ was designed as a generally useful conceptual tool and is simply too vague as we focus on and tackle the complex associations of topic, circumstance and interlocutors.

We will see the problems with the poor definition of concepts such as ‘intimacy’ and ‘in-group’ in more detail in [Chapter 3](#) and need to be wary of making one-to-one equations based on simplifications of modern sociolinguistic research. Pliny’s figures are a salutary reminder of the complexities of bilingual practices. Inter-sentential switching across his correspondence reaches over a quarter of the total, higher than in the other sets of correspondence analysed, whereas in Pliny’s tenth book of correspondence with Trajan, when he was primarily based in Bithynia and Pontus, we find no inter-sentential switching at all ([Table 7](#)). A decontextualized analysis, focusing on the level of intra-sentential switching, might make the assumption that the relations between the correspondents in the final book of correspondence are particularly close, but the reality is, of course, quite different: the intra-sentential code-switching in this book is, with the exception of νομοῦ Μερμερίτου (x.x.i) and ὑπὲρ Μολέαν (x.xv), entirely single word and in all but two cases (εἰσήλασαν (x.cxviii.i) and εἰσήλασεν (x.cxvix)) involves exclusively nouns and adjectives. Poplack in fact includes single nouns with tag-switches as the less intimate, more emblematic type of code-switching.⁵⁰ Although we count single nouns as intra-sentential, we agree with Poplack that some single-noun contexts might not indicate close relations, or even high levels of bilingualism. Analysis of these thirty-three code-switches suggests that they should be assigned to the ‘Greek cultural sphere’ (GCS) category and the words have nearly all been

⁴⁹ Gumperz 1982.

⁵⁰ Poplack 1980: 589–90. It is important to note that there has been considerable debate over whether single-word switches should count as code-switching or not. Several early commentators, with the notable exception of Haugen (1973), deem them to be borrowings. Although single-word switches can be difficult to distinguish from borrowings, several studies have demonstrated that they should be (see Callahan 2004: 7–9).

Table 7 *Number of examples of inter- or intra-sentential switching by author in Pliny's correspondence*

Author of letter	Inter	Inter?	Intra	Total
Pliny (Books 1–10)	37	1	71	109
Pliny (Book 10)			24	24
Trajan (Book 10)			9	9
<i>Total</i>	37	1	104	142

selected because they are the best way to refer to precise, local, current affairs. The choice of the appropriate word for the context in these letters does not necessarily imply any kind of ‘intimacy’ between the correspondents but in this case does indicate proficiency in both languages and cultural contexts. The linguistic data can only be interpreted and have broader relevance once they are considered in their immediate and wider cultural context. [Chapters 3–5](#) attempt detailed sociolinguistic analysis informed by the technical data discussed here.

Modelling Code-Switching

The division of code-switches into inter- and intra-sentential is only an initial basic division, which is undertaken by many approaching corpora of switches in order to begin to control the data linguistically. Once intra-sentential switches have been isolated, then analysis can be undertaken to explore how these switches fit with the surrounding language. As with the analysis of parts of speech presented above, again the literary-quotational switches are excluded.

Callahan's syntactic analysis based on the switches from her English–Spanish texts sought to answer two questions: whether written code-switching required its own syntactic model different from that based on oral output and whether Myers-Scotton's MLF model would hold for the data in her corpus. Her answer to the first was based on exploration of the second and concluded that ‘[i]t seems clear that written codeswitching

does not require a separate model of syntactic constraints. The codeswitches in my data correspond in general to the syntactic as well as the discourse patterns reported for oral codeswitching.⁵¹ What may seem surprising is that the reason for this might not simply be a result of the fact that much of the material assessed comprises representations of speech and ‘oral style narrative’, because she notes that

it is precisely these portions of the corpus that offer the most challenges to the syntactic constraints tested. That is, those texts in the corpus that conform more closely to traditional written formats are the ones most readily accounted for by the MLF model principles. In contrast, the texts that display the most radical shifting of the ML [Matrix Language], for example, are also ones that bear the most resemblance to oral discourse.⁵²

She concludes, therefore, that oral versus written is not a crucial factor in the syntactic patterns of code-switching. In this chapter, we use our data to explore whether the same might be true of epistolographic Roman code-switching, namely, whether it, in general terms, seems to fit the syntactic models created for modern oral switches.

There are several competing grammatical/syntactic models for code-switching, but Myers-Scotton’s MLF is arguably the most well known, and the one with which classicists have engaged and is used by Callahan in the most systematic analysis of modern code-switching in writing.⁵³ One of the key features of the elaborated MLF model is the ‘Uniform Structure Principle’, which essentially states ‘no chaos allowed’.⁵⁴ This highlights the fact that there are constraints on the ways in which the Matrix Language (ML), in our case Latin, and the Embedded Language (EL), Greek, usually interact in competent bilingual speech. Although the complexity and spontaneity of code-switching interactions might

⁵¹ Callahan 2004: 69.

⁵² Callahan 2004: 69.

⁵³ I briefly commented on the relevance of the MLF for the code-switching in Fronto’s correspondence; see Mullen 2015. Wenskus (e.g. 1998) and Swain 2002 also use this model in their discussions. Dunkel 2000 discusses the syntax of the switches in Cicero’s letters to Atticus and uses the term ‘matrix’ but does not refer to the MLF or Myers-Scotton.

⁵⁴ Myers-Scotton and Jake 2009: 336–7.

appear to an outsider to be flexible and random as to the point at which switches occur, in reality code-switchers can identify fabricated phrases that seem ill-formed and they can comfortably process two languages simultaneously in their brains, switching between them without severely disrupting the syntax and grammar of either language.⁵⁵

Under the MLF, the ML (the base, or dominant, language) sets the framework, with the EL slotting into its syntactic structure (e.g. following the ML word order under the 'Morpheme Order Principle') and providing 'content' rather than 'system' morphemes (which the ML provides under the 'System Morpheme Principle').⁵⁶ Where the EL switch is lengthier, an 'EL island' can form, which follows EL norms and in which the principles of the MLF do not apply. The model is more complex than this, however, with not all 'system' morphemes behaving in the same way: 'early system morphemes' (such as plural markers), for example, may not be provided by the ML, whereas 'outside morphemes' (e.g. case markers) must be from the ML.

The MLF suffers, however, as do all the other models, from several weaknesses. First the rigid split between ML and EL has been deemed too subjective, schematic and blunt to cope with the messiness of highly bilingual code-switching.⁵⁷ The problematic response to this attack has been to state that the MLF only applies to 'classic' code-switching,⁵⁸ which essentially seems to be defined as code-switching that fits the model. Second is a lack of objective criteria in identifying an EL

⁵⁵ Many linguists who do not follow the MLF take what appear to be similar stances, though rhetoric has tended to inflate the differences (essentially that, under the MLF, the languages do not participate on equal terms). Romaine (1995: 126), for example, adduces an 'equivalence constraint', which 'predicts that code switches will tend to occur at points where the juxtaposition of elements from the two languages does not violate a syntactic rule of either language. That is, code-switching will tend to occur at points where the surface structures of the two languages map onto each other.'

⁵⁶ Myers-Scotton and Jake 2009: 338 '[c]ontent morphemes are defined as assigning or receiving thematic roles; system morphemes do not'.

⁵⁷ See Gardner-Chloros 2009 *passim*.

⁵⁸ Myers-Scotton and Jake 2009: 337. It is clear from various comments by Myers-Scotton that code-switching involving closely related languages might not count as 'classic', see Swain 2002: 144.

island. As Gardner-Chloros states '[t]he class of EL islands is open-ended, so the question is how such islands are to be identified without circularity'.⁵⁹ The third issue is that the categorization of morphemes into content and system types, and later subdivisions, does not appreciate that different languages may classify content and system morphemes differently.⁶⁰ The fourth is that, since the first full formulation in the 1990s,⁶¹ the model has been repeatedly revised and made more complex to respond to numerous criticisms from researchers producing counter-examples and exceptions to the rules,⁶² making it hard to follow the scholarly debate across time and undermining the claim to universal validity. Nonetheless, we discuss the model here, given its ubiquity and the fact that the first issue does not apply to Roman elite code-switching, where the ML is almost always easy to identify. The third and fourth issues can be mitigated by focusing, as we do in what follows, on the main aspects of the model as a general guide to tendencies rather than strict constraints and rules.

The Operation of the Matrix Language? Case Usage

Although the common Indo-European origin of Latin and Greek means that they share a great deal of grammatical forms and usages, there are many instances where there is no direct equivalence in case usage between the two languages. The Latin ablative combines ablative, instrumental and locative functions, whereas in Greek the dative takes on instrumental and locative functions, leaving ablative functions to the genitive. So when an ablative would be required in Latin, the choice of an equivalent must be made in Greek. Adams' analysis, in Cicero's letters to Atticus, of the collocation of Greek forms in agreement with Latin ablatives or in a position dependent

⁵⁹ Gardner-Chloros 2009: 102.

⁶⁰ See, for example, Gardner-Chloros 2009: 102–3. Gardner-Chloros also suggests that the categorization of these types that are supposedly activated differentially in the brain seems largely to derive, in circular fashion again, from the evidence of code-switching itself (2009: 102).

⁶¹ Myers-Scotton 1993.

⁶² See, for example, Myers-Scotton 2006: 233–87; Myers-Scotton and Jake 2009.

on a preposition (e.g. *a, cum, de, in, ex*) or other part of speech requiring the ablative (e.g. the verb *utor*) reveals two important features.⁶³ First, there appears to be a marked preference for Greek dative endings in $-\alpha$ and $-\omega$, which map closely onto the Latin ablatives in $-a$ and $-o$, and not only this but the $-\alpha$ ending seems to be exclusively, with one exception, used for first declension nouns rather than the more common $-\eta$, presumably again in preference for forms matching the Latin. These $-\alpha$ and $-\omega$ endings represent seventeen out of twenty-one examples and might have been designed to be bilingual in the sense that they could be taken as either Latin or Greek endings, and appear to facilitate a smooth integration of the languages. Adams goes so far as to view this as a ‘constraint’ in Cicero’s code-switching: ‘[o]n the whole Cicero code-switches into the Greek dative with ablative function only if the form of the dative corresponds to a Latin ablative; he puts a constraint on his code-switching, by avoiding for example *eta* forms of nouns with the function of the Latin ablative’.⁶⁴

Second, Adams demonstrates that there appears to be a preference for the dative in Greek in contexts where Latin would use the ablative, even when the genitive might have represented a more logical choice from a Greek perspective. Examples include *ab ἐποχῇ* (XII.12.3) and *ex Dolabellae ἀριστείας* (XIV.19.1), where the Greek equivalents ἀπο and ἐκ would take the genitive, and *opus est σχολίῳ* (XVI.7.3), where we might have reasonably expected a Greek genitive, given that the Greek equivalents δεῖ and χρεῖα ἐστί both take the genitive.⁶⁵ This choice to opt for dative rather than genitive morphology may be a result of the closer formal resemblance between the Greek dative and Latin ablative. Indeed, in all but one of the cases (*ab ἐποχῇ*) where there has been an extension of the use of the Greek dative on the analogy of Latin practice, the morphology used in Greek corresponds to the ablative in Latin. We might even wonder whether this might in fact

⁶³ Adams 2003a: 497–503.

⁶⁴ Adams 2003a: 499.

⁶⁵ Adams 2003a: 501.

be the Latin ablative ending and not a Greek dative at all. If so, it might be an example of the operation of the MLF, in that '[w]hen the ML is a language with case assigning verbs (and/or prepositions), case markers are also outsiders. Almost without exception, EL elements receive the expected ML case marker as in ... English *grass* is inflected with prepositional case from Russian [*grass-e*]'.⁶⁶ That is, the form could actually be analysed as a Latin ablative on a Greek noun.

From the corpus *Ad Familiares* nine examples are relevant for this discussion (Table 8). These are all examples where the Greek noun stands in a position which would have been occupied by an ablative in Latin, for example after prepositions *de*, *in*, *ex* and *a*, or taking instrumental or locative functions. Immediately we notice that four of the nine examples (in bold in Table 8) are the output of *familiares* and not Cicero himself: this is a larger number than we would expect, given that only fifteen intra-sentential, non-literary-quotational code-switches in total are not by Cicero, and reminds us to be careful not to extrapolate too readily from Cicero's, or any, idiolect. On this very partial evidence we could suggest that Cicero may have been more inclined to avoid switches into Greek at points involving Latin ablatives than some of his contemporaries. The examples support Adams' claim that there may be a preference for the Greek dative where Latin would use the ablative, even when the genitive might have been a more obvious choice from an exclusively Greek perspective, since again we find examples with Latin prepositions *a* and *ex* controlling Greek dative nouns. However, the examples do not seem to support the extension beyond the letters to Atticus of Adams' suggestion of a preference for code-switches into the Greek dative with ablative function only if the form of the dative corresponds to a Latin ablative. Only four of the nine examples provide us with the apparently preferred α and $-\omega$, with the other forms in $-\epsilon\iota$ and $-\omicron\iota\varsigma$ not finding neat Latin equivalents. Cicero himself switches only twice to α and $-\omega$ datives and three times to less congruent forms.

⁶⁶ Myers-Scotton and Jake 2009: 347.

Table 8 *Examples of Greek code-switches in Latin ablative contexts in the intra-sentential, non-literary-quotational code-switches in the Ad Familiares, with examples by authors other than Cicero in bold*

Reference	Author	Addressee	Code-switch in context
v.20.6	Cicero	Mescinius Rufus	<i>sed si quid est, quoniam de λογεία parum †grauisum† est</i>
vii.29.1	Curius	Cicero	<i>sum enim χρήσει μὲν tuus, κτήσει δὲ Attici nostri*</i>
xv.19.2	Cassius	Cicero	<i>ἡδονὴν uero et ἀτ<αρ>αξίαν uirtute, iustitia, τῷ καλῷ parari et uerum et probabile</i>
xv.16.3	Cicero	Cassius	<i>in ista ipsa αἰρέσει metuo ne plus neruorum sit quam ego putarim, si modo eam tu probas</i>
xv.16.3	Cicero	Cassius	<i>enim stomachabere et moleste feres, plura dicemus postulabimusque ex qua αἰρέσει 'ui hominibus armatis' deiectus sis in eam restituare</i>
xvi.21.4	Cicero Junior	Tiro	<i>non est enim seiunctus iocus a philologia et cottidiana συζητήσει</i>
xvi.23.2	Cicero	Tiro	<i>etsi Atticus noster, quia quondam me commoueri πανικοῖς intellexit</i>
xvi.23.1	Cicero	Tiro	<i>Balbus ad me scripsit tanta se ἐπιφορᾷ oppressum ut loqui non possit</i>
xii.13.4	Cassius Parmensis	Cicero	<i>Cassius noster cum decem legionibus et cohortibus xx auxiliariis et milium equitatu a milibus passuum xx castra habet posita Πάλτω et existimat se sine proelio posse uincere. nam iam ternis tetrachmis triticum apud Dolabellam est</i>

* For the context of this comment, see Wilcox 2012: 36–9.

In [Chapter 4](#), we shall explore a letter from Fronto to Marcus which contains several switches involving the term εἰκῶν. One of these examples involves an ablative formation in Latin. If the reading *in hac* εἰκόνε at VdH 41.22 is correct, then we might not want to see it as a hybrid formation (Greek stem with Latin ending), as we shall see, in reverse, with the forms in *-teon*, *-tata* below, but perhaps an example of a feature of the MLF in operation, that is, of the EL (Greek) receiving case markers from the ML (Latin). *in hac* εἰκόνε might be an example of where the lack of an ablative in Greek has resulted in a what could be described as a ‘ML override’. Adams remarks of this form that ‘unconscious interference is out of the question in a learned bilingual such as Fronto: Fronto must have produced the macaronic form deliberately, perhaps in jest. The same word occurs repeatedly earlier in the letter, correctly inflected as Greek; this case may be a humorous variation.’⁶⁷ Adams is undoubtedly right that this is not likely to be an example of interference, but the notion of humorous variation does not, in this case, seem likely. The letter is a serious didactic piece from tutor to pupil with no obvious impression of playful banter. The coinage of hybrid forms and the results of the operation of the ML may at times be hard to differentiate, but it is an important, though subtle, distinction. It reminds us that languages, and dividing lines between them, are flexible and fluid and that we should be cautious about using morphological integration as a firm diagnostic for borrowing: code-switched nouns may be integrated into the ML and masquerade as borrowings.

There are eleven examples of Greek code-switches being used in contexts in which Latin ablatives might have been expected in Fronto’s correspondence ([Table 9](#)). Given that these are found in just over 100 examples of intra-sentential, non-literary-quotational code-switching, this seems to be a frequency of an expected order and there may not have been any strategy of avoidance of Latin ablative contexts for switching. The group includes examples which are dependent

⁶⁷ Adams [2003a](#): 421 n. 21. Wenskus [1995](#): 177–8 also discusses possible interpretations of the form; she does not refer to the MLF as this only began to be presented in the 1990s.

Table 9 *Examples of Greek code-switches in Latin ablative contexts in the intra-sentential, non-literary-quotational code-switches in Fronto's correspondence*

Reference (VdH)	Author	Addressee	Code-switch in context
(1) 6.3	Marcus	Fronto	<i>eiusdem illo primo utar epichiremate</i>
(2) 46.11	Fronto	Marcus	<i>ergo iam hic mihi ὀνοματοποι<ι>ας opus est</i>
(3) 151.19	Fronto	Marcus	<i>διασκευῇ et παρεκβάσει carendum (illegible lines precede)</i>
(4) 49.17	Fronto	Marcus	<i>ubique ornandum, ubique phaleris utendum, pauca τῶ μέσῳ χαρακτηρί</i>
(5) 132.18	Fronto	Lucius Verus	<i>amplior mihi et ornatio uidebar daduchis Eleusine faces gestantibus et regibus scepra tenentibus et quindecimuiris libros adeuntibus</i>
(6) 12.3	Marcus	Fronto	<i>olim testamenta ex deorum munitissimis aedibus proferebantur aut tabulariis aut <th>ecis aut archieis aut opisthodomis</i>
(7) 26.1	Marcus	Fronto	<i>tamen nihil de mea prothymia decessero aut defecero</i>
(8) 44.8	Fronto	Marcus	<i>ita ut fecisti in illa gnome breuicula</i>
(9) 38.17	Marcus	Fronto	<i>ita neque fidem in negotio pannychio neque modestiam in existimatione tua laeseris</i>
(10) 41.22	Fronto	Marcus	<i>in hac εἰκόνη, quam de patre tuo teque depinxi</i>
(11) 228.19	Fronto	Marcus	<i>in apopsi itane ** iucundiores tibi esse videntur (text unclear)</i>

on verbal forms taking the ablative in Latin (*utor, careo, opus est*) (1–3), a locative example (4), an ablative of comparison (5), and six examples following Latin prepositions which take the ablative (6–11). A higher than normal percentage of these ‘ablative’ examples display the code-switch in Latin script, with over half apparently avoiding script switching.⁶⁸ Although we shall see that we must be nervous about attributing much interpretive value to the use of script in Fronto’s text (Chapter 4), it may not be coincidence that the script more frequently remains in that of the ML in these ablative contexts. Indeed, in the seven forms in Latin script we might see the operation of the ML in determining Latin case endings, as we saw with *in hac εἰκόνε* above, with at least three of the examples: *epichiremate, daduchis*,⁶⁹ *opisthodomis*,⁷⁰ and perhaps *apopsi* (for ἀπόψει).⁷¹ The examples also show a preference for the Greek dative even after the preposition *ex* (Greek ἐκ) which would take the genitive in Greek, as we saw in the Ciceronian correspondence, but, this time, with *opus est* we find a genitive in *ergo iam hic mihi ὀνοματοποι<ί>ας opus est* ‘therefore right now I need to coin a word’, which might follow the Greek equivalents δεῖ / χρεῖα ἐστὶ plus genitive.

Pliny’s code-switching presents a familiar picture, with a similar total number of examples of Greek code-switches in Latin ablative positions as in the Frontonian correspondence. All Pliny’s examples, however, with only a couple of exceptions (ζήλω (I.ii.1), and possibly νομοῦ Μεμφίτου (X.X.1)), are presented in our transmitted text in Latin script. In addition, all these examples receive Latin morphology and, in all but three cases (*apodyterio* (ablative dependent on *superpositum est*) (v.vi.27), *in bule* (x.lxxxi.1), *bule et ecclesia* (within ablative absolute construction) (x.cx.1)), these do not match Greek morphological equivalents and therefore might be more straightforwardly

⁶⁸ This reminds us that there may be at least some examples ‘hidden’ in Latin script in Cicero’s letters (Chapter 3).

⁶⁹ This occurs in attested Latin apparently only here and *CIL* vi 2251 (*daduchus*).

⁷⁰ This occurs in attested Latin apparently only here, in Greek at Varro 5.160.

⁷¹ For the problems in deciding which of the Greek words in Latin script count as code-switches and which as borrowings, see the detailed discussion in Chapter 4.

considered examples of the operation of the ML in giving case endings to the EL: *cum procoetone* (II.xvii.10), *xeniis* (dependent on *abstinui*) (v.xiii.8), *cum psephismate* (x.xliii.1), *pro iselasticis certaminibus* (x.cxviii.1). Again we could see here a preference for an avoidance of Greek script in this ablative environment. But we should note that in the case of the Plinian intra-sentential, non-literary-quotational code-switches fewer than half, only twenty-nine out of seventy-six examples, are in Greek script anyway, the smallest proportion in all our authors. The use of Roman script for these Greek words (it is not known whether this reflects the original writing or was introduced later in the history of the text) can make code-switches harder to recover. Greek in Latin script certainly has a different impact on the modern reader than Greek in Greek, and some readers will doubtless disagree with our categorization of some of these examples from ablative contexts in Latin script, and might place *xeniis*, for example, at the borrowing end of the continuum.

An interesting run of Greek vocabulary in Latin script, which takes in two of the examples in ablative contexts cited above, can be found in the discussion of the villas which Pliny provides in letters to Clusinius(?) Gallus (II.xvii) and to Domitius Apollinaris (v.vi).⁷² The vocabulary that we have assigned as code-switches in the database includes the following, several of which appear more than once across the two letters: *andron*,⁷³ *apodyterium*, *baptisterium*, *hapsis*, *heliocaminus*, *hypocauston*, *procoeton*, *propnigeon*,⁷⁴ *sphaeristerium*, *zotheca*. The term that starts the run, *hapsida* (*adnectitur angulo cubiculum in hapsida curvatum, quod ambitum solis fenestris omnibus sequitur* (II.xvii.8)), is here

⁷² For the uncertainty of the identity of the first recipient, see Whitton 2013: 222–3. For Pliny's villas, see Bergmann 1995; Gibson and Morello 2012: 200–3.

⁷³ This is not used to mean 'men's quarters' as we know it in Greek, but 'passage way'. Vitruvius' discussion suggests the integrated nature of the word in Latin (*nostri* in distinction to *Graeci*), which could easily be classed as a borrowing: *inter duo autem peristylia et hospitalia itinera sunt quae mesauloe dicuntur, quod inter duas aulas media sunt interposita, nostri autem eas andronas appellant ... Graeci ... andronas appellant oecos, ubi conuiuia uirilia solent esse* (6.7.5).

⁷⁴ The precise meaning of this term is unclear, though it seems to refer to some kind of warm room. As Whitton notes '[t]he addition of *balinei* may suggest unfamiliarity' (2013: 236).

uniquely aspirated and ‘declined *à la grecque*’,⁷⁵ but dependent on a Latin preposition. The extent to which we are right to consider these, but not some better attested examples such as *bi(ly)bliothea*, as code-switches has to be judged item by item. In the case of the villa letters, we must recognize that the difficulty in categorization may lie partly in the fact that Pliny may well be playing a deliberate game with the status of these architectural terms in the Graeco-Roman mind:⁷⁶ the words here might well strike the reader as Greek in origin (whether they really occur first, or only in Pliny, in a sense does not matter, none of them is commonly attested in Latin c. AD 100), but their presentation is meant to be neatly integrated into the Latin discourse.⁷⁷ Pliny is at once showing the exoticism and opulence of the villas and how Greek ways of living have been annexed and controlled by Rome.⁷⁸ He does not seem to have been put off by the dismissive words of Varro, who snidely remarks that Romans do not think they own a villa *si non multis uocabulis retinniat Graecis* (2 praef. 2) ‘if it does not ring with much Greek vocabulary’ and lists examples, including two that Pliny later uses in ablative contexts: *procoetona* and *apodyterion*. Varro had already in an

⁷⁵ Whitton 2013: 233.

⁷⁶ For the use of Greek terms in Vitruvius, see Callebat 2013.

⁷⁷ The terminology is not, for example, explicitly flagged as Greek, as we see in scientific and technical Latin texts, where the use of phrases such as *quod Graece dicitur*, *Graeci dicunt*, *a Graecis appellatur* has been deemed by Callebat a ‘[s]téréotype de haute fréquence’ (2013: 351), and occurs with about a fifth of Greek terms in Vitruvius (2013: 351). A field in the online database indicates where the use of Greek is flagged. These ‘flags’ do their job in catching the attention of the reader but are in fact not particularly frequent. There are perhaps only two examples with Greek code-switches across the entirety of Pliny’s letters: *sunt enim maxime mirabilia quae maxime insperata, maxime periculosa utque Graeci magis expriment, παράβολα* (IX.xxvi.4) and, arguably, *magna, domine, et ad totam provinciam pertinens quaestio est de condicione et alimentis eorum, quos uocant θρεπτικούς* (X.lxv.1). They are used slightly more frequently in the Frontonian correspondence, with approximately 7 per cent of the switches affected, and are exclusively employed by Fronto: *Graeci ... [appellant]* (VdH 179.6); *Graecis uerbis fortasse apertius significabo* (149.21–150.3); *quam Graeci ... appellant* (48.12); *quae Graeci ... uocant* (89.3); *quam figuram Graeci ... appellant* (89.5); *quas Graeci ... uocant* (96.21); *ut uerum sit quod Attici ueteres dixerunt* (182.19); *Graeci ... appellant* (157.2); and possibly, *quam scriptores artium ... uocant* (97.4); *quoniam eius rei nomen apud Romanos nullum est* (173.15). See Chapter 3 for flagging of Greek in Cicero’s letters.

⁷⁸ Riggsby remarks on ‘the profusion and redundancy that is a mark of luxury’ and ‘cultural traditions that are also a mark of upper-class luxury’ (2003: 170).

earlier age spotted the proclivity of the Roman elite for language games in the descriptions of their villas.⁷⁹

It is not only in the ablative realm that we see bilingual negotiations concerning case usage. Adams remarks that Dunkel is mistaken in treating exclamatory Greek nouns in the accusative, instead of the genitive, in Cicero's letters to Atticus as 'true interference'.⁸⁰ Although he does not specify how we should understand these examples, Adams notes that Wenskus has pointed out that the use of the Greek accusative in exclamations occurs when Latin also occurs in the exclamation (*ο ἀνιστορησίαν turpem* (VI.1.18); *quam in me incredibilem ἐκτένειαν* (X.17.1); *ο hospitem mihi tam grauem ἀμεταμέλητον* (XIII.52.2)) and that the Greek genitive exclamatory construction is reserved for when the content is wholly Greek (e.g. ὦ πραγμάτων ἀσυγκλώστων (VI.1); ὦ πολλῆς ἀγεννείας (X.15.2); ὦ ἀπεραντολογίας ἀηδοῦς (XII.9); ὦ πράξεως καλῆς μὲν, ἀτελους δέ (XIV.12)⁸¹).⁸² In the former cases we may be witnessing another example of the ML setting the syntactic frame into which the EL fits. Our other authors provide scant comparanda,⁸³ but one example in a letter from Pliny to Minicius Fundanus seems to offer a parallel where the ML sets the case for the Greek noun: *o mare, o litus, uerum secretumque* μουσεῖον, *quam multa inuenitis, quam multa dictatis!* (I.ix.6).

If we follow the idea of the dominance of the ML to explain these cases, it is perhaps surprising that not more of the Greek code-switches display Latin morphology. Latin script for code-switches seems to be linked to increased use of Latin

⁷⁹ For an exploration of the reflection of people and morals in descriptions of villas, see Henderson 2004.

⁸⁰ Adams 2003a: 497; Dunkel 2000: 127.

⁸¹ This is probably a quotation from an unknown source.

⁸² Wenskus 1996: 256.

⁸³ The only example from Fronto's correspondence occurs in a letter from Marcus to his tutor: *o me hominem beatum huic magistro traditum!* *ο ἐπιχειρήματα, ο τάξις, ο elegantia, ο lepos, ο uenustas, ο uerba, ο nitor, ο argutiae, ο kharites, ο ἀσκησις, ο omnia!* (VdH 27.11). It starts with the expected accusative exclamation in Latin, followed by a string of nouns in the nominative in a mixture of Greek and Latin. The interjection ὦ is not found with the Greek nouns, but Latin *ο* is used throughout. This, of course, from an auditory point of view works in either language and we should be cautious about relying too much on the quality of the text in determining the script used here.

morphology and, for examples in Greek script, the similarity of the case systems in Latin and Greek means that the same, or closely equivalent, case can easily be found, so Greek script and morphology can normally be left to do the job.

Possible Constraints

As we have seen above, verbal forms are not common in the intra-sentential, non-literary-quotational code-switches in our authors, particularly in the Plinian/Suetonian corpora. When they do occur, however, optatives are missing. Dunkel remarks in his short discussion on the code-switching in Cicero's letters to Atticus that

[t]his is quite striking in comparison to the frequency of subordinate infinitives and indicatives, and is evidently due to friction between the two systems of temporal 'sequence' of subordinate subjunctives when the main verb is preterital: in Greek they are replaced by a different mode (the optative), but in Latin by a past tense of the same mode. This annoying difference led to the avoidance of such constructions.⁸⁴

Whether we should term this a 'constraint' per se, is debatable, but there seems to have been an avoidance of non-congruent forms in this case. In MLF terms, the optative ending would presumably count as a bound morpheme and an 'outsider' system morpheme which should derive from the ML, Latin, rather than the EL, Greek (unless it forms an EL island). The MLF would therefore lead us to expect an avoidance of optatives outside EL islands.

Dunkel also remarks that in Cicero's letters to Atticus '[i]n general surprisingly little use is made of the Greek article'.⁸⁵ In the *Ad Familiares*, only two switches comprising single nouns are furnished with Greek articles. One example, from a letter to Varro is, however, uncertain in its reading at the crucial point: *si uenturus es, scito necesse esse te uenire; sin autem non es, τ<ὸν> ἀδυνάτων est te uenire* (IX.4.1). The other is from a letter from Cassius to Cicero: *ἡδονὴν uero et ἀτ<αρ>αξίαν uirtute, iustitia, τῷ καλῷ parari et uerum et*

⁸⁴ Dunkel 2000: 126–7.

⁸⁵ Dunkel 2000: 127. He does not offer any data or examples.

probabile est (xv.19.2), whose form takes that of the fixed philosophical term τὸ καλόν. Beyond these noun phrases comprising article plus single noun in the intra-sentential, non-literary-quotational examples, only one switch, found in a letter to Dolabella, contains a definite article: *ego tamquam criticus antiquus iudicaturus sum utrum sint* τοῦ ποιητοῦ ἀν παρεμβεβλημένοι (ix.10.1). Of fifty-four Greek noun switches found in Fronto's correspondence, only five are furnished with the Greek article. The Greek article is never used with single-noun switches in the Plinian correspondence, nor with any of the nominal switches in the corpus of Suetonius. For all these authors the lack of a definite article in Latin was normal and it seems as though, again, the ML may be dictating this pattern. This may not be a hard-and-fast constraint on the use of Greek, but it seems to be a firm preference in our authors and a feature of Romans' Greek elsewhere.⁸⁶ The MLF counts definite articles as early system morphemes and says they can be from either the ML (Latin) or the EL (Greek), so this does not contravene 'the rules'.⁸⁷

'Artificial' Forms

The code-switching employed by our Roman authors is not, in general, designed to shock its audience and leave them feeling as if the language employed in the letters is inappropriate for the context. Letters may deal with uncomfortable topics and strained relations, but they usually do this within a decorous framework and the language follows patterns which would have seemed, if readers had asked themselves, appropriate in bilingual discourse. However, there are possible instances where these expectations are played with by the authors, for example in the creation of hybrids perhaps for humorous effect, which are not otherwise attested in our extant literature.

One of the best known examples, *flocci faciteon*, occurs in a letter from Cicero to Atticus:

⁸⁶ See Adams 2003a: 515–19 for examples of missing definite articles in other sources of Romans' Greek.

⁸⁷ Myers-Scotton and Jake 2009: 342.

Syntactic Dimension of Code-Switching

sed heus tu, uidesne consulatum illum nostrum, quem Curio antea ἀποθεῶσιν uocabat, si hic factus erit, fabam mimum futurum? qua re, ut opinor, φιλοσοφητέον, id quod tu facis, et istos consulatus non flocci facteon. (Att. 1.16.13)

But gosh do you see that that consulship of mine, which Curius used to call an *apotheosis* before, if this man is elected will be worth less than a bean? For that reason I guess it is necessary to philosophize, which is what you do, and not to worry about those consulships.

facteon is described by Adams as following:⁸⁸

If a writer who is a primary speaker of language A (say Latin) imposes a morpheme from B (Greek) on a word from A, the transfer may be described as a case either of intra-sentential *code-switching within a word boundary* or alternatively of *morphological borrowing*. Cicero's humorous coinage *facteon* (Att. 1.16.13), formed on a Latin base with the Greek -τέος suffix, should be put in this class, as it is a deliberate creation in his first language by one who had a fluent command of a second language, Greek. The 'facetious hybrid' (Shackleton Bailey) in this case follows directly on a Greek verb of the same formation: φιλοσοφητέον, *id quod tu facis, et istos consulatus non flocci facteon* ... The process is conscious and deliberate, whatever the name we attach to it.⁸⁹

This example does not feature in our database, due to the choice to collect code-switches for this prolific letter writer systematically via the use of Greek script in Shackleton Bailey's editions (for a defence of this not unproblematic choice, see [Chapter 3](#)). But should it have been? Certainly Adams is right to imply that we should not be counting *facteon* as an example of interference from Greek to Latin, but his suggestion of morphological borrowing is hard to support, given that this Greek ending is not used either by Cicero, or apparently anyone else, in contemporary Latin. Adams' other suggestion, that this could be *code-switching within a word boundary*, following Romaine's terminology,⁹⁰ might have more traction, but modern linguists might be tempted by another interpretation: that the Greek φιλοσοφητέον might act, temporarily at least, as the ML in this case, setting the language for both verbs

⁸⁸ Adams (2003a: 28) provides comparanda from Ennius (a Homeric genitive in Latinized form) via Quintilian: *at in eadem uitii geminatione 'Mettoeo Fufetioeo' dicens Ennius poetico iure defenditur* (1.5.12) and via the same from Ovid: *at οἶνοι' ἀγαθοῖο ferimus in Graecis, Ouidius ioco cludit 'uinoeo bonoeo'* (8.6.33).

⁸⁹ Adams 2003a: 27–8.

⁹⁰ Romaine 1995: 123.

in parallel: φιλοσοφητέον and *facteon*. Swain refers to *facteon* as a ‘humorous formation’ and ‘a joke form’,⁹¹ but the context does not suggest that there is much levity here. Cicero’s letter is a lengthy complaint about the state of political and legal affairs, comparing his striving for the *res publica* with the corruption and selfishness of his rivals. Cicero is annoyed with Atticus for his lack of action and cannot be serious when he suggests that philosophizing and not caring is the way forward. Instead this is a passive aggressive comment, indicating that Atticus should really care more. Perhaps Swain is right about *facteon* being a joke, but it is certainly not a joking context, and the use of such an unusual form alongside the colloquial-flavoured *heus tu* to catch Atticus’ attention and the banality of *faba* ‘bean’,⁹² may be designed to underscore the incongruity of the proposed actions in the context of doing the right Roman thing. Cicero is perhaps creating a rhetoric which reflects the uncomfortable marriage in Atticus of overblown lofty ideals and idleness.

There appears to be a similar hybrid at Suetonius *Aug.* 87.2, *betizare*, which is formed, again, from a Latin root and a Greek suffix. The context is Suetonius’ collection of non-standard forms that Augustus writes in his Latin letters: *ponit assidue et pro ‘stulto’ ‘baceolum’ et pro ‘pullo’ ‘pulleiaceum’ et pro ‘cerrito’ ‘uacerrosum’ et ‘uapide se habere’ pro ‘male’ et ‘betizare’ pro ‘languere’, quod uulgo ‘lathanizare’ dicitur*. In this case, *betizare* is presumably modelled on *lathanizare* < Greek λαχανίζειν, although Adams remarks that this verb must have belonged to Roman Greek, since the Greek (non-middle) verb is not used in this sense ‘wilt, droop’ in extant sources.⁹³ Since we do not have direct evidence of the verb in Augustus’ own writings, and so there is no precise context, we cannot be sure that this is a ‘humorous’ usage and,⁹⁴ given the productivity of this suffix *-izo* < ιζειν in non-standard Latin varieties,⁹⁵

⁹¹ Swain 2002: 154, 155.

⁹² For *heus tu*, and its use, especially in comedy, see Barrios-Lech 2016: 162–6.

⁹³ Adams 2003a: 420 n. 17.

⁹⁴ Adams 2003a: 420.

⁹⁵ Herman 2000: 105.

reflected especially in later Christian contexts, this may well not be considered a code-switch, but rather a use of an increasingly productive suffix on a Latin root. However, whatever the view of modern classical linguists, perhaps the most important point to remember here is that Suetonius saw it as worthy of remark.

Fronto also offers some possible hybrid formations, though the readings in each case are uncertain. The unique hybrid form *Plautinotato* (Latin with Greek ending) is not accepted in VdH and has been replaced by the more pedestrian *Plautino* <e>t rato (153.13). Holford-Strevens (1991: 78) draws our attention to this matter:

at *Orat.* 2, where in the first edition he [van den Hout] was content to write

‘†Plautinotrato†’, he now prefers Baehrens’ flat *Plautino* <e>t rato (153.13) to Hertz’s and Studemund’s palmary *Plautinotato*, a hybrid exactly suited to the epistolary style, cf. Cic. *Att.* 1.16.13 ‘flocci facteon’.

Plautinotato would be paralleled in wholly Latin form by Gellius’ superlative *Plautinissimi* (GEL. 3.3.4) and has been cited in a range of secondary literature. The decision on the preferred reading remains difficult, however, and our database shows that, while Holford-Strevens is right to alert us to parallels in epistolographic contexts, these are extremely rare. Indeed, the letter in which this form appears is a serious disquisition on speeches and this type of mid-word switch does not sit neatly with the other examples of code-switching in the letter, which include several quotations and citation of Greek terms (GCS Literature/Rhetoric/Grammar). The code-switching here is not jovial, but considered and restrained: this letter was written at some point in the 160s and Fronto is trying to negotiate a (now very unequal) relationship with Marcus. There are no Greek forms nearby to create a Greek ML, which might have lent the morphology, and there is no sign of any playfulness that might have inspired a hybrid form. Although, of course, the role of Plautus as a transmitter of Greek works may provide a motivation and context for a word-internal code-switch, if we accept it.

Another two possible examples of word-internal code-switches may occur in the short letter by Fronto to Volumnius Quadratus:

quia epistolicotata scripsisti, ut e materia composita sit rhetoricotata. (VdH 188.3–5)

Because you have written in very epistolary style so that from the material composed it is highly rhetorical.⁹⁶

VdH reports that the first hand in the manuscript offers *epistolicotata* (*uel-lata*) ‘very epistolary style’ and *rheticotata* ‘highly rhetorical’. Evidently, the second hand struggled with these forms and added above the first *i(n) al(io) epistulicotata* and to the second *rheticotota*. This is unsurprising; neither form is attested in Latin or Greek, though we do find the latter in comparative formation (e.g. Cicero’s *rheticoterus* (*De Orat.* 3.171)).⁹⁷ This letter is much more informal and relaxed in tone and we can imagine that a light-hearted discussion of styles of writing might trigger the desire for a Hellenic frisson. Of the few examples attested in our letters this is perhaps the one that comes closest to a ‘humorous hybrid’ and which may be analysed linguistically as an intra-word code-switch.

Summary

We have considered the MLF, a model for oral intra-sentential code-switching that is not without problems, but which has been a major point of reference for syntactical studies of written code-switching to date. We have not tested the model in great detail (i.e. categorizing all our examples into the morpheme sub-categories and testing the ‘rules’) for the following reasons: first, any counter-examples would probably be dismissed as examples of the EL forming ‘EL islands’ and/or as the examples not being ‘classic’ code-switching (Latin and Greek would be charged with being too closely related since mutual unintelligibility is one feature of the languages used in the original model);⁹⁸ and second,

⁹⁶ It is hard to make much sense of the Latin at this point in the fragmentary letter.

⁹⁷ For further examples, see van den Hout 1999: 438.

⁹⁸ For these features, see Myers-Scotton 2006: 253.

it is hard to see the value of the precise constraints and rules set out in the MLF, which seem open to attack, owing to the sheer complexity of the code-switching output across time and space. Other researchers, however, may wish to use the database to develop the assessment and revision of models such as the MLF for the ancient evidence or even create their own.

The value of the model is rather at the more general level. Our texts seem to coincide with the overall linguistic contours of the operation of both modern oral and written switching identified respectively by Myers-Scotton and Callahan, reinforcing our view that Roman code-switching can have an association, though not a straightforward one, with oral language. The vast majority of the switches follow the ‘no chaos allowed’ of the Uniform Structure Principle and the primacy, under certain conditions, of the ML identified by Myers-Scotton. The notion of the ML and EL and their controlled interaction are useful for understanding our Roman texts. Indeed, we have discussed a key point of interest which must be of relevance for anyone exploring bilingual phenomena: the fact that ML case markers can be found in EL code-switches is of wide significance, as it is often assumed that morphological assimilation to the recipient language is a diagnostic feature of borrowing, when in some cases it may simply be a feature of the operation of the ML on the EL in code-switching (which may, or may not, result in borrowing).

A Comparative Overview of the Function of Code-Switching across the Corpora

Roman epistolographers writing after the publication of Cicero’s letters were acutely aware of this powerful literary figure’s oeuvre. Fronto’s correspondence is littered with references to, and interactions with, Cicero’s work (see above and [Chapter 4](#)) and Pliny, in a letter to Maturus Arrianus, expresses his desire, having been made *augur* as Cicero had been, to emulate Cicero’s literary success (IV.8.4–5).⁹⁹ However,

⁹⁹ See also IX.2 for Pliny’s apology for not living up to the Ciceronian standards of letter writing demanded by Sabinus.

although Roman letter writers cannot avoid the model of Cicero's letters, which is partly why code-switching can be admitted in their correspondence, it has been argued that the functionality of the imperial code-switching has a different feel from that in Cicero's republican letters, as we saw at the opening of the chapter. In our consideration of whether there might be some evidence for the general impression that Cicero's code-switching seems more 'conversational' than that found in the later epistolographers, an empirically based assessment of the functions of code-switching over time may be illuminating.

Table 10 shows the totals for the functional categories of code-switching in *Ad Atticum*, *Ad Familiares*, *Ad Quintum fratrem*, Pliny, Fronto, Suetonius (all), and Suetonius (epistolary only), with subcategories removed for simplicity (the full tables can be found in the Appendix and details of every example in the online database). The number of different functions in *Ad Atticum* is higher than for any of the other Ciceronian corpora, and roughly double the number found in the epistolary code-switching in the Plinian and Frontonian correspondence and in Suetonius' corpus. Given other circumstantial evidence, to impute a more creative and wide-ranging code-switching in the epistolary conversation between Atticus and Cicero does not seem unreasonable, but any firm conclusion in that direction is somewhat undermined by the fact that this corpus offers around six times as many total examples as the next most prolific code-switching corpus and we cannot exclude the possibility of chance in skewing these results.

If we look more closely at the most frequently attested functions we find that, of the functions attested at more than 15 per cent, only two recur: GCS and Quotation (Table 11). GCS and Quotation alternate in their occupancy of the top two spots, except in the two smallest data sets, the examples from *Ad Quintum fratrem* and the epistolary switches in Suetonius, whose low numbers of total examples make skewing a serious risk. This simple ordering of the most common functions hides more complexity, however. The total number of functions which can be classed as GCS and Quotation is significantly higher in the correspondence of Pliny and

Table 10 *Grouped functions of code-switches by corpus (question marks denote uncertainty over the assignment of the function). Numbers have been rounded to whole numbers or to one decimal point if less than 1*

Function	<i>Ad Atticum</i>		<i>Ad Familiares</i>		<i>Ad Quintum fratrem</i>		Pliny's correspondence		Fronto's correspondence		Suetonius epistolary		Suetonius all	
	%		%		%		%		%		%		%	
Citation of Greek word under discussion	4	0.4	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.7
Code	16	1.8	1	0.8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Commentary	25	2.8	1	0.8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Description	131	15	14	11	3	6	3	2	2	1	11	41	16	11
Description?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0
Description: self-description	37	4.1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Discourse marker	2	0.2	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Exclamation	2	0.2	0	0	1	2	0	0	1	0.7	0	0	0	0
Explanation	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.7	0	0	0	0	0	0
Greek cultural sphere (GCS)	201	22	46	37	6	12	68	47	96	62	5	19	48	32
Greeting	2	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

(continued)

Table 10 (*cont.*)

Function	<i>Ad Atticum</i>		<i>Ad Familiares</i>		<i>Ad Quintum fratrem</i>		Pliny's correspondence		Fronto's correspondence		Suetonius epistolary		Suetonius all	
	%		%		%		%		%		%		%	
Instruction/Request	13	1.4	1	0.8	1	2	0	0	3	2	0	0	2	1
Instruction/Request?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.7	0	0	0	0
Insult/Mockery	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	5
Metalinguistic	71	8	12	10	9	18	2	1	3	2	2	7	2	1
Naming	48	5.3	7	6	3	6	3	2	4	3	1	4	17	11
Omen/Prophecy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1
Question	1	0.1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1
Quotation	244	27	29	24	22	45	65	45	38	25	2	7	31	21
Referential	78	9	6	5	2	4	0	0	0	0	3	11	14	9
Referential?	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	3	2	0	0	0	0
Wordplay	17	2	4	3	0	0	2	1	0	0	3	11	7	5
Wordplay?	1	0.1	0	0	1	2	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0
<i>Total</i>	<i>900</i>		<i>123</i>		<i>49</i>		<i>146</i>		<i>155</i>		<i>27</i>		<i>149</i>	

Comparative Overview of the Functions

Table 11 *The most frequently attested functions of code-switching (above 15 per cent) and their percentages across all authors*

	Function	%	Function	%
Cicero, <i>Ad Atticum</i>	Quotation	27	GCS	22
Cicero, <i>Ad Familiares</i>	GCS	37	Quotation	24
Cicero, <i>Ad Quintum fratrem</i>	Quotation	45	Metalinguistic	18
Pliny's correspondence	GCS	47	Quotation	45
Fronto's correspondence	GCS	62	Quotation	25
Suetonius (all)	GCS	32	Quotation	21
Suetonius (epistolary)	Description	41	GCS	19

Fronto (at over 90 and 85 per cent respectively) than in any of the other texts. For Cicero's letters and Suetonius' corpus these functions together represent a lower proportion of the total, at around half the examples. In Cicero's case and in the epistolary examples from Suetonius a higher percentage of switches can be assigned to the category 'Description' than for Pliny and Fronto and use has been made of the functional category 'Referential', which is a function that is not at all well attested in the Pliny and Fronto (there are some examples, but all are doubtful).

These features of the functional modality of the Greek may be important as both referential and descriptive switches may, arguably, lend a colloquial tone to the code-switching, and we can turn to modern code-switching research to consider this in more detail. This is not unproblematic, however. One of the issues is that the publications on modern code-switching, both oral and written, are inconsistent in their

Table 12 *Tabulation of results of Callahan's functional analysis of Spanish–English code-switches in her corpus of US fictional prose (1970–2000) (based on Callahan 2004: table 3.2)*

Function	Tokens	%
Referential	4483	61
Vocative	873	12
Expletive	299	4
Quotation	210	3
Commentary, repetition	367	5
Set phrases, tags, exclamations	764	10
Discourse markers	284	4
Directives	86	1
<i>Total</i>	<i>7366</i>	<i>100</i>

functional categories, both between authors and within the work of individuals. Furthermore, scholars do not always seem to criticize their choices and think about whether the functional categories are comparable or not (we wrestled with this issue at great length; for details, see [Chapter 1](#)).¹⁰⁰ Finally, they do not often present their data in full, but rather offer bare statistics and a handful of relatively context-free, cherry-picked examples.¹⁰¹

Callahan's categorization of several thousand Spanish–English code-switches in the fictional prose found in selected modern short stories and novellas, much of which contains dialogue and first-person narration, has 61 per cent assigned to a 'referential' function, and conversely a very small proportion, only 3 per cent, to 'quotation' ([Table 12](#)).¹⁰² Callahan notes that referential code-switching, where the switches essentially have

¹⁰⁰ Modern sociolinguists do, of course, appreciate the fact that they face a range of issues, including the subjectivity of the task of categorization; see Montes-Alcalá 2005: 104.

¹⁰¹ See, for example, the problematic article on English–Spanish code-switching, Montes-Alcalá 2005, which is also based on a very small data set.

¹⁰² Callahan 2004: 75.

no function other than to transmit information, is particularly common in situations where code-switching is the unmarked code.¹⁰³

The categories used by Callahan do not match the ones created for Roman code-switching, and we can quickly appreciate that, whilst the figures for quotation may be relatively easy to compare across analyses, the ‘referential’ category may not. In fact ‘referential’ as used by Callahan may incorporate examples that would have been categorized by us as ‘GCS’, that is, words that, in our evidence, may have been chosen because they belong to a GCS within the Roman sociocultural environment. This function of tapping into the cultural sphere of the language of the code-switches is an important function in Callahan’s data, reinforcing the strong links she establishes between the use of Spanish and the identities and socio-political and cultural concerns of the Latino community. However, she views the main function of switches of this type as ‘the transmission of information in a narrative’¹⁰⁴ and has subsumed what we might have categorized under GCS into her ‘referential’ category, making direct comparison difficult. If we turn for comparative evidence to an analysis of a similar code-switching environment, Montes-Alcalá’s corpus of Spanish–English code-switches in Chicano, Cuban American and Nuyorican drama, fiction and poetry (Table 13), we find that quotation occurs at a similarly low rate, 5 per cent, and that the largest category is described as ‘Lexical/Cultural need’, which, at least in part, may be similar to our category ‘GCS’. The category ‘Referential’ does not appear at all. It seems that our ‘Referential’ and ‘GCS’ may, in this author’s scheme, be merged into the category ‘Lexical/Cultural need’. We have not used the category ‘Lexical need’, as we did not identify cases where we felt our letter writers had been forced to use Greek because of a gap in the Latin lexicon: Latin almost always could provide a suitable option (as we see in the successful avoidance of code-switching by Cicero in various genres), and the notion of

¹⁰³ Callahan 2004: 76.

¹⁰⁴ Callahan 2004: 70–1.

Table 13 *Tabulation of results of Montes-Alcalá's functional analysis of Spanish–English code-switches in her corpus of Chicano, Cuban American and Nuyorican drama, fiction and poetry (based on percentages provided in Montes-Alcalá 2015)*

Function	%
Quotation	5
Emphasis	12
Stylistic	19
Clarification/Elaboration	21
Lexical/Cultural need	40
Triggered*	3
<i>Total</i>	<i>100 (= 621 tokens)</i>

* Montes-Alcalá (2015: 270) states that '[t]riggered switches were classified as a separate phenomenon since they do not perform a socio-pragmatic function per se', but she nonetheless includes them in her breakdown of the percentage of functions.

separate lexica does not fit our conception of the skilled and flexible bilingualism of the authors.¹⁰⁵

Despite the fact that it is impossible to compare neatly our functions of code-switching across different corpora (see Table 14 for functional categories of modern written code-switching employed in recent analyses aligned as far as possible), the evidence from modern code-switching demonstrates that quotation does not make up more than a very low proportion of the switching and it makes sense to assume that, whether studies use the term or not, when referential switches (i.e. 'functionally light' switches) occur, these are generally indicative of code-switching being well embedded in a speech community, and perhaps suggest a more conversational tone. On this argument Suetonius' epistolographic examples and those in the letters to Atticus might seem the least 'artificial' in tone of our sets of evidence. The correspondence of both Pliny and Fronto conversely employs large amounts of

¹⁰⁵ For switching into Greek for 'lexical need' in non-epistolary Latin texts, see VITR. 5.4.1.

code-switching with specific literary associations, broadly conceived: Pliny offers a very large percentage of quotations and the most frequent function in Fronto's correspondence is GCS Literature/Rhetoric/Grammar at over 41 per cent (see [Table 15](#) for a breakdown of the category GCS across all authors). The functional analysis arrived at in our research is at variance with Fleury's unsupported comments on Fronto's correspondence that 'Greek is frequently used as formula [*sic*] for common expressions outside of all literary referent. This practice suggests that, at least in bilingual circles, the use of Greek in this period was not seen as pedantic but was rather a common practice within the everyday experience of educated men.'¹⁰⁶ Rather Rochette's remarks cited at the opening of this chapter on the Greek in Pliny's letters seem to hold for both sets of correspondence. But as we shall see the matter is complicated: parts of what Fleury states may hold true and some implications of Rochette's statement may not.

We can dismiss relatively quickly the idea that the apparently more artificial and technical switches in the post-Ciceronian correspondence can be put down to the notion that bilingualism is less practised in colloquial contexts amongst the imperial elites. Other historical, literary and epigraphic evidence may suggest that societal and individual bilingualism in some respects might even be at its height in the second century AD. Rochette's well-informed view in his survey of Roman bilingualism is that '[j]usqu'au règne de Marc Aurèle (161–180), durant lequel, en littérature surtout, la symbiose entre les cultures grecque et latine atteint son apogée, la majorité des savants utilisent le grec'.¹⁰⁷ This may cause us to pause in assuming that we can accurately identify which forms of code-switching are 'naturalistic': what appears to us to be an artificial practice may in fact feel perfectly natural to proficient bilinguals with a strong shared literary and rhetorical background, certainly in writing and possibly also in speech. So, although Fleury is wrong about code-switching in Fronto regularly being used outside the literary sphere, the comment that the use of Greek

¹⁰⁶ Fleury 2012: 65–6.

¹⁰⁷ Rochette 1997: 63.

Table 14 *Tabulation of functions of code-switching employed in recent analyses of modern written code-switching*

Callahan 2004*	Jonsson 2010**	McClure 1998	Montes-Alcalá 2012	Montes-Alcalá 2015
Referential	'Gap'***	Lack of a good translation/ Lack of set word or phrase/Greater explicitness of form	Lexical need	Lexical/ Cultural need
Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Commentary/Repetition	Reiteration	Emphasis through repetition	Clarification	Clarification/ Elaboration
		Emphasis through repetition	Emphasis	Emphasis
Set phrase/Tag/Exclamation			Linguistic routines/ Idiomatic expression	

Interjection (vocatives, expletives, discourse markers, directives)	Interjection			
<i>Stylistic and metaphorical purposes</i> (Callahan 2004: 14)	Word/ Language play	Creation of tone (e.g. sarcastic, erudite) Wordplay	Stylistic device	Stylistic
<i>Metalinguistic comments</i> (Callahan 2004: 3, 125)				

-
- * The functions in italics show categories which Callahan discusses but which are not listed in her own summary table of functions (see Table 12).
- ** Jonsson (2010: 1298) introduces her discussion of the functions with this comment, which underscores the difficulties of capturing the functions of code-switching: ‘since no list can ever claim to be exhaustive, it is necessary to point out that these loci are not the only or even the most significant loci in which local functions of CS can be found in Chicano theater. Since CS is fluid and dynamic, it resists any simple listing of all its functions. The reason for narrowing down the selection to five loci has more to do with the limitations of this study than with the actual loci in which CS has clear local functions. The main purpose of this selection of loci is to show the rich variety of local functions that CS has in Chicano theater.’
- *** Jonsson explains this term as follows: ‘the filling of gaps occurs because a word or an expression in one language offers other connotations and as a result evokes more powerful images for the audience’ (2010: 1308).

20 Table 15 *Numbers of examples in the subcategories of the function ‘Greek cultural sphere’ (GCS) across all authors. Examples listed with uncertain categorization in the full tables in the Appendix have been included here under the category that best fits*

GCS	<i>Ad Atticum</i>	<i>Ad Familiares</i>	<i>Ad Quintum fratrem</i>	Pliny's correspondence	Fronto's correspondence	Suetonius epistolary	Suetonius all
Amor	1				12		2
Architecture	5		1	17			2
Clothing							2
Contest/Entertainment	5			14	2		16
Finance	5	2					
Geography/Administration	1	2		2			
Literature/Rhetoric/Grammar	67	9	4	9	65	4	17
Medicine	17	9		3	4	1	1
Music	3						
Philosophy	38	19			5		3
Politics/Law	29	4	1	15	3		
Religion	12			1	2		4
Other	18	1		7	3		1
<i>Total</i>	<i>201</i>	<i>46</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>68</i>	<i>96</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>48</i>

represents ‘common practice within the everyday experience of educated men’ may well still hold true and Rochette’s implication that Plinian code-switching does not share the characteristics of the *Umgangssprache* and may be unrelated to oral output may be misleading. Whilst the practice of Roman epistolographic code-switching is different in its high levels of use of literary quotation compared to published studies of written and oral modern code-switching, we should not necessarily assume that the highly literary written code-switching used in imperial Roman letters did not reflect practices also used during in-group elite Roman conversations. Individuals in the modern world who lace their erudite discourse with constant literary quotations, in Latin, Greek, French and German, demonstrate that, with enough learning and the appropriate environment, such code-switching is perfectly possible in oral contexts and indeed Suetonius has emperors quoting Greek literature in their speech ([Chapter 5](#)).

Although we can defend the importance of seeing a link between conversations of the elite and their letters (even when the code-switching to modern tastes might seem ‘artificial’ and literary), we need to be cautious. Any ‘naturalism’ we see is still a deliberate choice: the code-switching is carefully policed, only occurring between certain correspondents under certain conditions. Even Cicero’s most ‘conversational’ passages are carefully constructed and are arguably part of a strategy to achieve various ends and to promote a certain type of Graeco-Latin linguistic and cultural identity, as we shall see in [Chapter 3](#).

In all our writers, we undoubtedly have highly proficient bilingual elites employing Latin and Greek to create a Roman identity. One possible difference between outputs of the first century BC and the late first to second century AD may be that, in very general terms, later the division of labour may have been more securely defined for the languages and a level of confidence in their cultural strength reached which encouraged Romans to allow Greek to channel certain cultural associations within the Roman discourse (e.g. domains of love, law, politics, architecture and entertainment; see [Table 15](#)) with less paranoid self-reflection. Greek in the later letters can perhaps more straightforwardly be allowed dominance within the Latin text in agreed domains and

we might diagnose a strategy, at least in Fronto's commentary, to promote a certain type of Romanness, with *lingua Graeca* and *lingua Romana* in two strands rather than entwined *utraque lingua*. However, there are tensions between Fronto's expressed attitude and practice and, even if general trends in Roman elite society's attitudes towards Greek can be traced over time, different perspectives and relationships remained in play. This is exactly what allows the use of Greek code-switching in Roman texts to be so varied and powerful. The changing nature of language within Romanness is of fundamental importance for our appreciation of the Roman world and Suetonius' corpus ([Chapter 5](#)) may document shifts in emphasis of practice and commentary between the two contexts described in [Chapters 3](#) and [4](#).

Literary Quotations: A Case Study of Functionality and Syntax

Quotation is defended as a function of code-switching in [Chapter 1](#) and both modern linguists and classicists have followed this route. Swain, for example, notes that quotation in Cicero's letters 'should be seen as playing a part in the general pattern of code-switching'.¹⁰⁸ Adams twice remarks in his (modestly labelled 'rough and ready'¹⁰⁹) discussion of code-switching in Ciceronian letters that a systematic differentiation of the 'different forms which Greek takes' within code-switches,¹¹⁰ including, specifically, quotations, might be worthwhile. As far as we know, this is the first time that a tabulation of the sources of the Greek quotations in all four of our authors has been offered ([Table 16](#)).

The large number of authors cited in this list may not be surprising given what we have said about the erudite world of elite Roman code-switchers who can pepper their Latin with constant literary references.¹¹¹ But perhaps more surprising is that only

¹⁰⁸ Swain 2002: 158.

¹⁰⁹ Adams 2003a: 342.

¹¹⁰ Adams 2003a: 345.

¹¹¹ For recent discussions of the complex interactions of the Roman world with Greek literature, see Feeney 2016; Hutchinson 2013; Whitmarsh 2013.

Table 16 *Sources of literary quotations for code-switches across the authors. Partial, adapted and uncertain examples have been grouped with the likely source*

Literary source	<i>Ad Atticum</i>	<i>Ad Familiares</i>	<i>Ad Quintum fratrem</i>	Pliny's correspondence	Fronto's correspondence	Suetonius epistolary	Suetonius all
Aeschines				7			
Aeschylus			2				
Apollonius					5		
Archilochus	1						
Aristophanes				1			
Aristotle	3	2					
Atellan farce							1
Callimachus	1				2		
Carneades	2						
Cato					1		
Cicero				2			
Demosthenes				16			

(continued)

96 Table 16 (*cont.*)

Literary source	<i>Ad Atticum</i>	<i>Ad Familiares</i>	<i>Ad Quintum fratrem</i>	Pliny's correspondence	Fronto's correspondence	Suetonius epistolary	Suetonius all
Dionysius	1						
Epicharmus	1		1				
Epicurus	1	2					
Eupolis				4			
Euripides	12	3	1	3	1		3
Heraclitus	1						
Herodotus	1						
Hesiod	2	1		1			
Homer	50	8	6	17	14	1	11
Laberius					1		
Leonidas of Tarentum	1						
Menander	4						1
Phocylides	1						

Pindar	6						
Plato	1			1			
Plutarch						1	
Rhinton	1						
Sophocles	3		2				
Stesichorus	1						
Theodorus						1	
Thucydides	3			2			
Xenophon				1			
Proverb/ Gnomic statement	34	7	3	1		2	4
Popular verse							4
Mock literary							4
Unknown	8	1				2	1
							2

two authors are used by all four authors: Homer and Euripides, and twenty-three entries are only attested in the work of a single author. We might also be surprised at those names missing from this list, no Lysias, for example, and relatively little Menander and Plato. What we can say for sure is that these authors engage with a wide range of literature and do not slavishly follow the patterns of quotation of other epistolographic models.

Our authors are creative with their use of quotation. Scholars generally agree that a key motivation behind literary quotation in the epistolary context is in the parade of knowledge and the construction and maintenance of personal relationships. Quotations may be accompanied with a reference to the author and/or work or left unintroduced. The first option may be interpreted as a generous strategy, but could equally, in certain contexts, be deliberately patronizing, or the result of an over-eager pupil. Marcus cites Greek literature more often than his tutor, contributing well over half of the examples (all can be dated to the phase of his youthful instruction, AD 145 or earlier, with the exception of one from 145 to 156), and often provides an attribution. He appears sometimes disarmingly hesitant in his mission to impress Fronto, admitting (perhaps disingenuously?) uncertainty as to provenance *ut ait nescio quis Graecus (puto Thucydides)* τυφλοῦται γὰρ τὸ φιλοῦν περὶ τὸ φιλούμενον ‘as some Greek says (I think Thucydides) “for the lover is blind in respect to the loved”’ (VdH 50.16)¹¹² and later εἰς ὀμματ’εὔνου φωτὸς ἐνβλέψαι γλυκὺ *Euripides ait, opinior* ““Sweet it is to look into the eyes of a kind man” so says Euripides, I think’ (63.25–6). The second strategy – of non-attribution – may be a neat way ‘of flattering the recipient by assuming his knowledge of Greek literature’,¹¹³ but could also function quite differently in allowing ‘the writer to display his easy mastery of the classics and put pressure on the addressee to recognise the allusion’.¹¹⁴ There may also be unintended consequences if the author has

¹¹² Van den Hout (1999: 137) notes that Marcus has remembered wrongly and that this is likely a (loose) citation of Plato (*Laws* 5.731E) τυφλοῦται γὰρ περὶ τὸ φιλούμενον ὁ φιλῶν. Haines (1919: 108) corrects Thucydides to Theophrastus.

¹¹³ Adams 2003a: 42.

¹¹⁴ Adams 2003a: 43.

misjudged the breadth of knowledge of the recipient, resulting in an embarrassing and uncomfortable interaction. Adams points out that Dunkel is wrong to use the quotations of Menander at the beginning of a letter from Cicero to Atticus reporting a conversation between Cicero and his nephew Quintus (*Att.* 13.42.1) as a simple example of reversion to childhood for emotion or intimacy.¹¹⁵ These are unflagged quotations and the interlocutor is presumably expected to understand and respond: this is part of the elite cultural discourse that is rehearsed in the letters and, given the conversational context, these Greek comedic extracts also, probably unintentionally, reinforce the suggestion that this kind of quotational interaction is at home in oral interactions.

Our epistolographers also play with their readers, either to reinforce the in-group, almost conspiratorial, nature of their relationships or to make them feel inadequate by using partial quotations, whose full inference in the text can only be appreciated if the missing part of the quotation, and sometimes also the broader context of the original text, are understood.¹¹⁶ The identification of quotations as partial in nature is subjective, of course, but the salience of what is not said in the quotation seems to be clear in a handful of cases. We opened the book with an example of a partial Homeric quotation cited in a letter to Atticus by Cicero. Of all our authors, Cicero appears particularly fond of this learned game of incomplete quotation and examples are not only found in letters to his most frequent recipient Atticus, but to other associates, including Appian and Varro, as we shall see in [Chapter 3](#). Frequently, more is at stake than erudite playfulness: the parts of the quotations, both said and unsaid, are used subtly to express opinions, positive or negative, of the situation at hand and even to encourage action. They therefore form an important part of the careful negotiations of relationships effected through the letters.

Literary quotations are found more often in inter-sentential mode than non-quotational code-switches, but the proportion ranges from a quarter to well over half depending on the

¹¹⁵ Adams 2003a: 312, citing Dunkel 2000: 128.

¹¹⁶ For incomplete quotations, see Adams 2003a: 318; Baldwin 1992: 12; Dubuisson 1992: 192; Steele 1900: 394–5, 397.

corpus. In all authors, however, a proportion of examples are embedded into the Latin discourse, in some cases forming quite complex Latin–Greek bilingual passages, for example in the letter from Marcus to Fronto on sleep which his tutor praises using the comparison of the swirling of colourful dancers ([Chapter 4](#)).

sed hoc transeo. nunc quando apud Baias agimus in h<oc> d<iut>urno Ulixi laby<ri>ntho, ab Ulixē me paucula quae ad hanc rem attinent sumam. non enim ille profecto εἰκοστῷ demum ἔτει uenisset εἰς πατρίδα γαῖαν, neque in isto lacu tam diu oberrasset neque <quae> alia omnia Ὀδυσσεῖαν faciunt perpessus esset, nisi tum γλυκὺς ὕπνος ἐπήλυθε κεκμηῶτα. quamquam τῇ δεκάτῃ ἀνεφαίνετο πατρὶς ἄρουρα. se<d> quid somnus fecit?

βουλὴ δὲ κακὴ νίκησεν ἑταίρων·

ἄσκον μὲν λῦσαν, ἄνεμοι δ' ἐκ ἅπαντες ὄρουσαν,

τοὺς δ' αἶψ' ἀρπάξασα φέρεν πόντονδε θύελλα

κλαίοντας γαίης ἄπο πατ<ρ>ίδος.

quid rursum apud insulam Trinacriam?

οἱ δ' ἄρ' ἔμοι γλυκὺν ὕπνον ἐπὶ βλεφάροισιν ἔχουαν,

Εὐρύλοχος δ' ἐτάροισι κακῆς ἐξήρχετο βουλῆς.

postea, ubi Ἡελίοιο βόας καὶ ἴφια μῆλα ἔσφαξαν καὶ ἔδειραν καὶ μῆρ' ἐκάη καὶ σπλάγχν' ἐπάσαντο, quid tum expergitus Ulixes?

οἰμῶξας δὲ θεοῖσι μετ' ἀθανάτοισι γεγώνουν

ἧ με μάλ' εἰς ἄτην κοιμήσατε <ν>ηλεῖ ὕπνω.

so<m>nus autem Ulixen ne patriam quidem suam diu agnosceret siuit, cuius καὶ καπνὸν ἀποθρῶσκοντα νοῆσαι ἱμείρετο.

nunc a Laertio ad Atridam transeo. nam illud πασσυδῆ, quod eum decepit, cuius causa tot legiones funduntur, fugantur, ex somno et ex somnio profecto oritur. quid, quom ὁ ποιητῆς Agamemnonem laudat, quid ait?

ἔνθ' οὐκ ἂν βρίζοντα ἴδοις Ἀγαμέμνονα δῖον·

quid, quom reprehendit?

οὐ χρὴ παννύχιον εὐδῆιν βο<u>ληφόρον ἄνδρα,

quos quidem uersus orator egregius mire quondam euertit.

transeo nunc ad Q. Ennium nostrum, quem tu ais ex somno et somnio initium sibi fecisse. sed profecto nisi ex somno suscitatus esset, numquam somnium suum narrasset.

hinc ad Hesiodum pastorem, quem dormientem poetam ais factum. atenim ego memini olim apud magistrum me legere:

ποιμένι μῆλα νέμοντι παρ' ἵχνιον ὀξέος ἵππου

Ἡσιόδω Μουσέων ἑσμὸς ὅτ' ἠντίασεν·

τὸ 'ὅτ' ἠντίασεν' uidēs quale sit, scilicet ambulanti obuīam uenisse Musas. quid autem tu de eo existimas, quem qui pulcherrime laudat, quid ait?

νήδυμος ἥδιστος θανάτῳ ἄγχιστα ἐοικώς.

Literary Quotations

haec satis tui amorei quam meae fiduciae luserim. nunc bene accusato somno dormitum eo, nam uespera haec ad te detexui. opto ne mihi somnus gratiam referat. (VdH 6.8–8.7)

But I let that pass. For the nonce, as we are staying at Baiae in this interminable labyrinth of Ulysses, I will take from Ulysses a few things which bear on my subject. For he surely would not have taken *twenty years his fatherland to reach*, nor have wandered so long about that pool, nor gone through all the other adventures which make up the *Odyssey*, had not then *sweet sleep seized his weary limbs*. Yet *on the tenth day his native soil appeared*—but what did sleep do?

*The evil counsel of my crew prevailed:
The bag they opened, and forth rushed the winds:
The fierce gale caught and swept them to the sea,
Weeping with sorrow, from their native shore.*

What again took place at the island of Trinacria?

*Nor winds sweet sleep upon mine eyelids shed:
Eurylochus his crew ill counsel gave.*

Afterwards, when the *Sungod's oxen and fat flocks ... they slew and flayed ... and burnt the thighs and ate the flesh*, what then Ulysses when awaked?

*Wailing I cried to all the Gods on high,
Who ruthless to my ruin made me sleep.*

Sleep, however, did not allow Ulysses a long recognition of his native land, from which he *yearned to see even the smoke leap upwards*.

Now I leave the son of Laertes for the son of Atreus. For that *with all haste*, which beguiled the latter, and led to the defeat and rout of so many legions, surely sprang from sleep and a dream. Again, when the poet would praise Agamemnon, what says he?—

*Then none might see the godlike Agamemnon sleeping—
what, when he is finding fault?—*

No councillor should sleep the whole night long,
verses indeed, which an illustrious orator once wrested in a strange fashion.

I now pass on to our friend Q. Ennius, who, you say, drew from sleep and a dream his first inspiration to write. But, marry, had he never waked from sleep, he had never told his dream.

From him let us to Hesiod the shepherd, who became a poet, you say, in slumber. But, indeed, I remember reading once upon a time at school:

*When on the swift steed's track he was leading his sheep to the pasture,
Hesiod once was met in the way by a bevy of Muses.*

That *was met*, you see what it implies? Why, that he was walking when the Muses met him. What, again, do you think of that, of which its most eloquent advocate says what?

Sweet dreamless sleep, death's counterfeit.

A Roman Conversation?

Enough of this trifling which I have indulged in more from love of you than from my own faith in it. Now after soundly abusing sleep, I am off to sleep: for I have spun all this out for you in the evening. I hope sleep will not pay me out. (trans. Haines 1919)

Marcus writes this argument against rest in response to a lost letter of Fronto encouraging his insomniac pupil to sleep. The literary quotations deployed are a mix of both inter- and intra-sentential code-switching, meandering through the *Odyssey* before turning to the *Iliad*, then to a quotation of Callimachus relating to Hesiod, before heading back to the *Odyssey*. The Greek journey is broken by a stop with *Q. Ennius noster*, whose *Annals* were inspired by Homer, and the frame of the piece is Latin: Odysseus is *Ulixes*. The first code-switch in particular underscores the creative strategies that can be used to embed the quotations within Latin discourse. This mode of splitting revered Greek literature is very rare and it may be that Marcus is operating here at the margins of what might be acceptable. Cicero warns in the *De Officiis* that Greek words should not be forced in (p. 14). The phrase εἰκοστῷ *demum* ἔτει *uenisset* εἰς πατρίδα γαῖαν seems inelegant and this form of intensive switching is not repeated by Marcus or Fronto.¹¹⁷

Creativity in the use of quotations also extends to the loose rendering or minor alteration of the original. In several cases we have quotations cited which are not exactly as we might expect: apparently some have been deliberately lightly altered, for example grammatically, to suit the context, others may have been paraphrased deliberately, or perhaps misremembered. In the letter cited above we see several selective renderings, for example the third inter-sentential code-switch where the quotation from *Odyssey* 12.370, 372 is missing its middle line. In the next intra-sentential switch we find καὶ καπνὸν ἀποθρῶσκοντα νοῆσαι ἱμείρετο, a shortened and adapted version of *Odyssey* 1.58–9,

¹¹⁷ It is a matter for debate whether this phrase should count as one intra-sentential switch or three (see the special issue of the *International Journal of Bilingualism* (2000) for a system of coding for complex language interaction phenomena in oral evidence, where attention is drawn to problems of this kind). In this case, and others, it was decided that it should count as one given the coherence and co-occurrence of the terms (involving quotations from *Od.* 19.484; 24.322).

where Homer has καπνὸν ἀποθρώσκοντα νοῆσαι / ἥς γαίης θανέειν ἰμείρεται. In both cases it seems likely that these were deliberate choices. There could be other examples that may not be deliberate. In a letter to Marcus, Fronto writes οἱ Πόντοιο διὰ στόμα *iter quo nauigassent* (VdH 155.19–20), and replaces the preposition κατὰ in his citation of the text of Apollonius (*Argonautica* 1.2), which could plausibly be regarded as a mistake. A final example, which can easily be viewed as a deliberate creative manipulation of the Greek original for the context, is drawn not from our authors' letters, but from a conversation recorded by Gellius involving one of our authors. During an interaction between Favorinus and Fronto, Favorinus quotes καὶ νύ κεν ἦ παρέλασσ' ἦ ἀμφήριστον ἔθηκεν (*Iliad* 23.382), as καὶ νύ κεν ἦ παρέλασσας ἦ ἀμφήριστον ἔθηκας (ii.26.5), with the phrase altered from the third person to the second and unelided so that he directly addresses his interlocutor. We will return to the precise context and interpretation of this passage in [Chapter 4](#), but for our present purposes it brings us back to one of the most important debates about the code-switching in our letters: how 'oral' is it?

Language in Letters: How 'Oral' Is Roman Epistolary Code-Switching?

Scholars have long debated the linguistic composition of Roman elite conversation and have turned to correspondence as one key source of indirect evidence. Indeed this has been encouraged by the texts themselves. Roman and Greek epistolographers and epistolographic commentators refer to the close relationship between spoken language and the language of letters.¹¹⁸ In an example that we have already seen in [Chapter 1](#), Cicero uses two adjectives to describe the colloquial nature of letters, underscoring the importance of adjusting one's language for the specific rhetorical context ([Chapter 3](#)).¹¹⁹

¹¹⁸ See Hall 2009 for the similarity between the language of letters and elite conversation. For ancient theorists of letters, see [Chapter 1](#).

¹¹⁹ For colloquialism in Latin, see Dickey and Chahoud 2010. For non-standard Latin, see Adams 2013 and 2016.

A Roman Conversation?

uerum tamen quid tibi ego uideor in epistulis? nonne plebeio sermone agere tecum? nec enim semper eodem modo; quid enim simile habet epistula aut iudicio aut contioni? quin ipsa iudicia non solemus omnia tractare uno modo: priuatas causas et eas tenuis agimus subtilius, capitis aut famae scilicet ornati. epistulas uero cotidianis uerbis texere solemus. (Fam. IX.21.1)

However tell me now, how do you find me as a letter writer? Do I not treat you to colloquial [lit. ‘plebeian’] style? For one cannot always do things the same way. What is the similarity between a letter and a court of law or a public meeting? Even for the courts we don’t have just one style. In pleading civil cases, unimportant ones, we put on no frills, whereas cases involving status or reputation naturally are more elaborate. As for letters, we weave them out of everyday language.

Suetonius evokes Cicero by using one of these two adjectives in describing Augustus’ letters from which he excerpts interesting non-standard features:¹²⁰

cotidiano sermone quaedam frequentius et notabiliter usurpasse eum, litterae ipsius autographae ostendant. (Aug. 87.1)

Letters in his own hand show that he used certain expressions from everyday language quite frequently and strikingly.

Famed as a stickler for correct Latin, Fronto constantly also extols the stylistic breadth and depth of the language and may be referring to the notion of colloquialism in Ciceronian letters in the following comment in a letter to Marcus:

nam epistulae tuae quas adsidue scripsisti mihi satis ostendunt, quid etiam in istis remissionibus et Tullianis facere possis. (VdH 20.3–5)

For your letters that you’ve constantly written are enough to show me what you can do even in that more relaxed and Ciceronian style.¹²¹

A relationship is clearly flagged in these passages between colloquial language and letters, but one which is not

¹²⁰ For the Augustan letters, see the recent anthology of ‘informal’ Latin, Adams 2016: 193–6.

¹²¹ There has been a good deal of debate on whether Fronto is being disparaging of Cicero or not here (see van den Hout 1999: 51–2). The context of the passage (Fronto is praising Marcus’ precocious skills) and the generally positive comments elsewhere made about Cicero (the longest discussion occurs at VdH 57.5–18, which opens with a sweeping compliment – Cicero is the *caput atque fons Romanae facundiae* – and then explains that he does not employ enough unusual words) suggest this is probably not a criticism.

straightforward.¹²² The first passage indicates that we are dealing with a controlled use of language: Cicero talks about the creation of letters in parallel to his construction of speeches for the law court and the *contio* and explicitly says that letters are ‘woven’, implying the intentional and creative process of the integration of strands of language. This is far from an admission of the use of the language of the masses. Fronto similarly flags up the fact that Marcus’ relaxed style in letters is exactly that, a choice of register which is aping Cicero. Suetonius supports this notion of the limits to epistolographic orality by picking out ‘everyday language’ in Augustus’ letters as something remarkable.

A key question is whether an analysis of the Greek code-switches can help in understanding the role of orality in Roman letters and the relationship with elite conversation. Swain opens his chapter on republican bilingualism, especially as witnessed in Cicero’s letters, with a confident statement: ‘[i]t is a commonly held view that Cicero’s peers were fluent in Greek *and* regularly used it in conversation with each other. There are, however, no grounds for the latter belief.’¹²³ The rest of Swain’s chapter provides clarification of this statement: he is specifically referring to the exclusive use of Greek in conversation and not Latin *sermo* which contains code-switches into Greek. On balance, it seems likely that entirely Greek conversations may not have been the norm, but we should remember that even the arch Latinist Fronto writes entirely Greek letters and certain oral contexts might have encouraged an entirely Hellenic output. Cicero in *De Senectute* even has Cato, famously the most Latin of Romans, devouring Greek literature in his old age, and in doing so exercising his mind and using it to imbue his thought and practice. Swain’s characterization of the elites as ‘no more than partially bilingual’¹²⁴ seems unhelpful: instead we might even claim that a defining characteristic of high-status Romans was full competence in both Latin and Greek linguistic and cultural spheres.

¹²² See, for example, Demetr. *Eloc.* 223–6.

¹²³ Swain 2002: 129.

¹²⁴ Swain 2002: 129.

Swain notes that several commentators have highlighted the Hellenistic Greek features in the Ciceronian correspondence and that this has led ‘to the view that Greek was regularly used by Cicero and his circle for private conversation’.¹²⁵ He thinks this does not hold up because Cicero was not aware of his non-classical linguistic features (although, even if true, it is not clear why this would affect their conversational use) and because there is no evidence of the regular use of Greek without Latin. However, recent research suggests that the premise that Cicero uses current spoken Greek in his Latin needs to be reconsidered based on detailed linguistic analysis of the nature of his language.

O’Sullivan’s assessment of the Greek in Cicero’s correspondence has demonstrated that it is more varied than has generally been appreciated.¹²⁶ Cicero’s own language seems, on the one hand, to be more classical – that is drawing on Attic prose – than we might have expected from someone who could converse in Greek following contemporary spoken norms. On the other hand, Cicero includes words not otherwise attested in Greek or Latin sources and perhaps coined by him (for example ἀλογευσόμενος (*Att.* VI.4.3))¹²⁷ and ranges deliberately over different dialects and periods of the language to achieve specific goals, such as deliberate obfuscation, the parading of knowledge and vivid characterizations of key individuals. O’Sullivan notes that in Cicero’s three passages of extended Greek (*Att.* VI.4, VI.5, IX.4), in order to achieve the first of these, obfuscation, which Cicero actually states as his aim at *Att.* VI.4.3 and VI.7.1, Cicero deliberately chooses words and the use of out-dated features such as tmesis and verbal adjectives to make the letters ‘opaque for the average reader of the Koine’.¹²⁸

Whilst on the whole Cicero can be seen to be basing his own Greek on classical rather than contemporary norms,

¹²⁵ Swain 2002: 147.

¹²⁶ O’Sullivan 2017.

¹²⁷ See Rose 1921 for a catalogue of Cicero’s Greek. O’Sullivan 2017: 92 discusses a project currently underway to update this work in the light of a century of papyrological finds and analysis.

¹²⁸ O’Sullivan 2017: 98.

O'Sullivan argues that 'this choice was by no means universal amongst his Roman peers',¹²⁹ giving examples of contemporary Greek rather than extant classical forms which can be associated with Atticus (for example *πειράζεσθαι* at *Att.* 16.7.8, which was in early poetry and re-emerges in Hellenistic Greek but not in standard Attic) and Antony (for example *γίνεσθαι* at *Att.* 10.13.1, the common form in Hellenistic Greek as opposed to the *γίγνεσθαι* of Attic). He goes on to remark that

[t]he two contrasts are suggestive: both Atticus, the couth and educated friend, the permanent resident of Athens, fluent in Greek, and Antony, the uncouth and vulgar enemy, whose knowledge of Greek seems to have been rudimentary, may have drawn essentially on the spoken variety of the language, in contrast to Cicero. Cicero's own use of Greek is in fact suggestive of that return to Classical Greek which we know as Atticism, and which first emerges into the historical record in the Roman orator's own lifetime, and, moreover, in Rome itself ... Atticism was not the invention of Greeks, but of Romans who, as outsiders, could see the difference between the evidently decayed Greek language around them and that of the Classical form which they studied so avidly.¹³⁰

This is not the place to debate the origins of Atticism; instead, of importance here is that once analysis of the Greek of the correspondence of Cicero takes into account, as far as is possible, non-Ciceronian authorship of letters and implicit and explicit quotation of Cicero's peers, patterns of flexibility and creativity of Greek language use emerge which add to our awareness of idiolectal variation and Cicero's depiction of character and context. This does not necessarily help to decide whether the elite *regularly* spoke Greek, but it suggests that Cicero is more aware of the linguistic richness of Greek than Swain allows. Cicero either directly reports or adds dialectal features to the code-switched discourse to reflect the realities of written and oral code-switching interaction amongst his peers.

One way for us to consider further the question of the orality of code-switching is to look at the code-switches which occur in specifically oral contexts, though transmitted via literary texts with all the attendant problems of intent and transmission.

¹²⁹ O'Sullivan 2017: 99.

¹³⁰ O'Sullivan 2017: 99.

Gellius provides us with testimony of conversations between Fronto and various interlocutors which contain a total of seventeen (all but one intra-sentential, and all but the two quotations single word) code-switches from Latin into Greek. Seven of these are the citation of the Greek words under discussion and some may query whether they should count as code-switching: we argue that they should be, given that they need not appear in Greek. The other ten have functions which seem to reflect relatively accurately those across the correspondence: six GCS (five of which are Literature/Rhetoric/Grammar terms); one literary quotation; one proverb; one title of a comedy; and one quotation of an interlocutor (Table 32 (Appendix)). Whether these conversations ever happened or not, they are surely meant to strike the consumers of Gellius' works as representative of some kind of linguistic reality.¹³¹

Amongst our corpora, we can turn in particular to the Suetonian corpus for explicitly oral contexts and find around fifty code-switches operating in non-epistolary oral situations (thirty-one oral contexts plus seventeen that are possibly oral contexts). It is striking that of these around half contain literary and mock literary quotations, proverbs and popular verses, demonstrating that the high levels of quotational switching that we have identified in epistolary switching ought not to be seen as a non-oral feature. Chapter 5 explores the origins of these examples and allows glimpses of code-switches operating both in imperial circles and on the streets of Rome. Many code-switches from Cicero's letters also contain explicitly or implicitly oral quotations which present a similar syntactic and functional form to the non-oral examples. One example in a letter to Atticus has Cicero imagining what Atticus might say and embeds a Greek proverb into the Latin words:

dices fortasse: dignitatis ὅλως tamquam δρυός, saluti, si me amas, consule. (Att. 11.19.1)

Perhaps you will say: 'enough of honour as in enough of acorns, consider safety, if you love me'.

¹³¹ For Gellius and his world, see Holford-Strevens and Vardi 2004.

Perhaps more interesting, however, for thinking about the oral operation of bilingualism is the passage in a letter to Papirius Paetus from Cicero which discusses obscenity and the Stoic philosophy of calling a spade a spade. Cicero describes a Latin term *bini* meaning ‘two each’ as being misunderstood as the Greek obscenity βίβει.

is Connus uocitatus est. num id obscenum putas? cum loquimur ‘terni’, nihil flagiti dicimus; at cum ‘bini’, obscenum est? ‘Graecis quidem’ inquires. nihil est in uerbo, quoniam et ego Graece scio et tamen tibi dico ‘bini’, idque tu facis, quasi ego Graece non Latine dixerim. (Fam. IX.22.3)

His name was Connus. Surely you don’t think that obscene? When we say ‘terni’, we say nothing shocking; but when we say ‘bini’, is that obscene? ‘Yes, for Greeks’ you will say. There is nothing in the word since I also know Greek and I still say to you ‘bini’, and you react as if I had said it in Greek and not in Latin.

The strong implication of the passage is that the conversation is in Latin and that the dirty-minded interlocutor understands the Greek verb ‘fuck’ rather than Latin ‘two each’. Throughout this letter Cicero demonstrates his facility with language by never stating a primary obscenity in Latin, but instead raising multiple examples indirectly through word-play and innuendo.¹³² In doing so, he jokingly protects his *uerecundia* and, more importantly, shows off his facility for linguistic manipulation. The word *bini*, however, could be seen as a direct transliteration of the Greek obscenity, and perhaps a sign that non-Latin rude words might somehow be safer to utter.¹³³ Although Cicero is not using the example *bini* to make a linguistic point, he unwittingly illustrates an example of the parallel processing that occurs in the minds of balanced, competent bilinguals when they are engaged in code-switching speech. He indicates that elite Romans in conversation may be prepared to expect Greek code-switches and therefore have the language ‘switched on’ in their brains (see also the use of Greek by Augustus to Tiberius to encourage him to think

¹³² For a detailed discussion, see Richlin 1992: 18–26. For the Latin sexual vocabulary, see Adams 1982.

¹³³ Indeed, although we do not see this in our letters, code-switching for expletives is common cross-culturally, see Callahan 2004: 114.

about the sound of Latin, pp. 259–60). Paetus is presumably meant to read this letter with both languages in mind and not be confused by the description of a scenario of conversational bilingualism that feels unfamiliar. This is an example of the letters at their most oral: the passage only makes sense if it is read orally and bilingually, whether that means aloud or not.

Ancient theorists of epistolography describe letters as being one half of a dialogue.¹³⁴ For the Roman elite, reading Latin letters without having Greek language and culture activated in their minds would be like accessing only part of that half of the dialogue, even when Greek is not directly cited. Paetus reappears in the [next chapter](#) as we assess the way in which Cicero uses, and avoids, Greek in communications with this famous Roman wit.

¹³⁴ Demetr. *Eloc.* 223.

CHAPTER 3

REPUBLIC OF LETTERS: THE POLITICS OF CICERO'S EPISTOLARY CODE-SWITCHING

The code-switching in Cicero's letters has been foundational to both the epistolary language of the other authors in this volume and to modern understandings of ancient code-switching. A study of Cicero's epistolary Greek therefore presents a different challenge from that of the other authors in this volume. Where the code-switching of Pliny, Fronto and Suetonius is largely uncharted territory, it is impossible to say the same about Cicero's.¹ There remain, however, new ways to approach the evidence: Adams states that 'much remains to be done on Ciceronian code-switching' and calls explicitly for more systematic analysis.² This chapter uses the methodology deployed across this volume to build on existing scholarship and provide fresh angles on Cicero's code-switching

¹ Works on Cicero's Greek include the following: Baldwin 1992; Dunkel 2000; Rose 1921; Steele 1900; Wenskus 1998, all largely on syntactic or linguistic aspects of code-switching. Adams 2003a: 308–46 and Swain 2002 are two important and broader sociolinguistic studies of Cicero's epistolary code-switching. Dubuisson 2005 offers a preliminary overview of his study of Greek in the letters, work which was sadly incomplete at his death. Subsequently, there have been some recent studies on particular aspects of Cicero's epistolary code-switching: Mäkilähde and Rissanen 2016 is a primarily methodological study of solidarity in Cicero's code-switching; O'Sullivan 2017 analyses the linguistic origins of Cicero's Greek (Chapter 2). Hutchinson 1998 is a rare example of the consideration of code-switching from other angles: he includes some references to Cicero's use of Greek in his study of the literary aspects of Cicero's letters: 13–15, 92, 155, 170. Oksala 1953 is a study of loanwords in Cicero: the letters are discussed at 91–109. Lists of Greek words in Cicero's letters can be found in Shackleton Bailey 1965–70: vol. VII; Tyrrell and Purser 1904. Shackleton Bailey 1962 and 1963 provide a discussion of some of these words.

² Adams 2003a: 345 (with a further call for this kind of analysis in his discussion of the chronology of Cicero's code-switching at 342). He suggests Poplack 1980: 602 as one model. Jackson 2014, some of whose data is used in Chapter 2, is one attempt at quantitative analysis of the kind suggested by Adams; the focus is, however, more syntactic than ours here. Steele 1900 gives some quantitative data on the types of word (adjectives, nouns, verbs, etc.) in Cicero's Greek.

and the ways in which it worked within the epistolary politics and networks of the Late Republic.

First, our systematic collection and categorization of the code-switches enables existing conclusions to be interrogated and adapted from a more empirical basis. The sensitive analyses of Cicero's Greek by Adams and Swain have usefully highlighted the range of types of Greek within the letters, but they have not attempted to quantify these types or compare them empirically.³ We track the distribution patterns of different types of switch, and consider how and where they vary in relation to their historical context and addressee. This systematic analysis enables us to understand the norms of Cicero's communication, and identify deviations from these. It also forms the basis for a comparison with the other authors in this volume, for whom Cicero's epistolary style was frequently a model.

The second main aim of the chapter is to integrate sociolinguistic and historical questions and to demonstrate that they must be approached in combination rather than as footnotes to one another. Understanding Cicero's code-switching relies on looking simultaneously from the linguistic details outward and from the broader historical circumstances inward. To this end, we look in detail at the use of Greek in letters to Caesar, Pompey, Appius Claudius and Atticus, considering instances of code-switching in these letters both in their immediate context and in relation to the broader epistolary strategies and expectations of the Late Republic. Cicero's Greek reflected, but also shaped, the nature of these epistolary relationships. It provided one means of negotiating the social and political frameworks in which Cicero was writing, and a way that he could articulate his (changing) attitudes and opinions, both political and personal.⁴ Through the Greek, we also consider the place of, and relationship between, different spheres (public, private, philosophical, political and literary) in late

³ Adams 2003a: 308–46; Swain 2002.

⁴ See Lintott 2008: 421–4 on the (in)consistency of Cicero's personal and political views.

republican epistolography. Literary quotations, for example, were used both to create distance from, and to underline, political and personal issues.

In addition to research on Cicero's code-switching by Adams and Swain, this chapter also engages with recent scholarship evaluating the construction and performance of Cicero's epistolary relationships more broadly. This scholarship has frequently made use of sociolinguistic approaches: Hall, for example, examines politeness strategies as a way of understanding how political relationships were structured; White uses sociolinguistic approaches to reconstruct the social and communicative frameworks in which Cicero worked; Williams analyses the language of the letters to understand the expected dynamics of *amicitia*; Wilcox considers the rhetorical dynamics of epistolary friendship in terms of the concept of gift exchange; Bernard examines the strategies that Cicero used to cultivate 'sociabilité' in the letters.⁵ These wider studies of the letters rarely approach the use of Greek critically,⁶ although Greek played an important role in the letters' broader social and political functions, as we shall show in the following discussion. In exploring this, we aim to illuminate further not only the practice of code-switching in the letters, but also the dynamics of politics and friendship in which it operated.

Approaching the Evidence: Cicero's Codes of Practice

The basis for this chapter, as for all the others, has been the collection and categorization of every instance of code-switching within the corpus of Cicero's letters. Before considering the patterns that emerge from this analysis, it is necessary first to take a step back and briefly consider some broader issues. Epistolary code-switching must be situated

⁵ Bernard 2013; Hall 1996, 2005, 2009; White 2010, Wilcox 2012; Williams 2012: 218–38. Roesch 2004 also discusses politeness in the letters.

⁶ White 2010: 5 for example, in a discussion of *Att.* 11.6, comments, 'the Greek words that creep in are a sure sign that Cicero is writing casually', and briefly references Adams in a footnote. One exception to the limited attention on Greek in these types of study is Gildenhard 2006 discussed further below, p. 168.

against Ciceronian language practices and attitudes elsewhere, since this background contributes to the effect of Greek within the letters. The complexities of script and manuscript and the difficulties of categorizing the evidence, familiar from across the volume, also need to be explored in relation to Cicero specifically.

Cicero's Language of Letters

The code-switching in the letters is only one part of Cicero's engagement with Greek. Across his prolific output, he engages in Greek language and culture in multiple ways: he translates Greek works; coins new Latin words associated with Greek equivalents; gives new meanings to existing Latin terms based on Greek; and borrows Greek words into Latin, often apparently for the first time. Plutarch mentions several of these practices in his life of Cicero (40.2):

αὐτῷ δ' ἔργον μὲν ἦν τὸ τοῦς φιλοσόφους συντελεῖν διαλόγους καὶ μεταφράζειν, καὶ τῶν διαλεκτικῶν ἢ φυσικῶν ὀνομάτων ἕκαστον εἰς Ῥωμαϊκὴν μεταβάλλειν διάλεκτον ἐκεῖνος γὰρ ἔστιν, ὡς φασιν, ὁ καὶ τὴν φαντασίαν καὶ τὴν συγκατάθεσιν καὶ τὴν ἐποχὴν καὶ τὴν κατάληψιν, ἔτι δὲ τὸ ἄτομον, τὸ ἀμερές, τὸ κενόν, ἄλλα τε πολλὰ τῶν τοιούτων ἐξονομάσας πρῶτος ἢ μάλιστα Ῥωμαῖοις, τὰ μὲν μεταφοραῖς, τὰ δ' οἰκειότησιν ἄλλαις γνώριμα καὶ προσήγορα μηχανησάμενος.

He also made it his task to compose and translate philosophical dialogues, and to render into Latin the several terms of dialectics and natural philosophy; for it was he, they say, who first, or especially, provided Latin names for τὴν φαντασίαν [*uisum*], τὴν συγκατάθεσιν [*adsensio atque adprobatio*], τὴν ἐποχὴν [*adsensionis retentio*], and τὴν κατάληψιν [*comprehensio*], as well as for τὸ ἄτομον [*corpus indiuiduum*], τὸ ἀμερές [*indiuiduum*], τὸ κενόν [*inane*], and many others like these, contriving partly by metaphors and partly by new and fitting terms to make them intelligible and familiar.⁷

Even within the letters, code-switching is, strictly speaking, just one type of bilingual phenomenon associated with language

⁷ Translation adapted from Perrin. Unless otherwise specified, all translations of Cicero's letters are taken from the Loeb editions of Shackleton Bailey (Shackleton Bailey 1999, 2001 and 2002). For the text of Cicero's letters, see Shackleton Bailey 1965–70, 1977, 1980. All other translations are the author's own unless specified.

contact (see [Chapter 1](#) for interference and borrowing).⁸ A broad study of all these different phenomena across generic boundaries would be welcome: Swain comments tantalizingly on the 'suggestive correlations' between the chronological distribution of borrowings and code-switching on the basis of comparisons between his own and Oksala's work.⁹

There are nonetheless good reasons for our choice to focus on code-switching here. The frequent self-consciousness of code-switching offers the opportunity to consider questions asked by, for example, White and Hall using a focused set of evidence: how does Cicero construct relationships? How does he manage particular functions within the letters? A study of code-switching also assists us in our understanding of the nature of letters as a genre, and the language choices and attitudes that they admit. Significantly, full-blown code-switching is, in the Ciceronian corpus, a practice that is largely restricted to the letters. The relationship between code-switching and the genre of epistolography is further illustrated by the fact that code-switching was a feature of the language of letters that received commentary in the ancient world ([Chapter 1](#)), and that the post-Ciceronian epistolographers in this volume self-consciously adopted. Code-switching both reflected the demands of letters and enabled their functions. As we saw in [Chapter 1](#), however, the relationship between code-switching and genre is complicated and code-switching was not a necessary part of Roman letter writing. The differences between Cicero's use of Greek within and beyond letters offer further evidence in support of these points and help us to understand the place of code-switching in epistolary texts.

Beyond the letters, instances of full-blown code-switches are rare. In the speeches, even Latinized Greek loanwords are

⁸ Works on other bilingual phenomena in the letters include Oksala 1953: 90–109 on 'Lehnwörter' in the letters; see further Dunkel 2000: 122. Dunkel 2000: 127 comments briefly on instances of interference in Cicero's epistolary Greek; see Adams 2003a: 497 for a brief response to this and [Chapter 2](#).

⁹ Swain 2002: 157. Mäkilähde and Rissanen 2016 also stress the need to see code-switching as part of a wider repertoire of linguistic strategies available to Cicero in the letters.

usually restricted to obviously ‘Greek’ contexts or used with pointed effect.¹⁰ Adams gives the vocabulary that Cicero uses to describe philosophers in the speeches as an example: he uses the Latin words *sapientes* and *docti* when talking about them neutrally, and only uses the Greek loanword *philosophi* when he wants to express hostility.¹¹ In his philosophical dialogues, Cicero prefers to translate Greek terms into Latin, coining new Latin technical terms in the process. Some of the code-switching within the letters is in fact a direct result of this. In *Ad Atticum* XVI.11.4, Cicero describes his composition of *De Officiis* and discusses with Atticus the correct translation for the term ‘duty’: *quod de inscriptione quaeris, non dubito quin καθήκον ‘officium’ sit, nisi quid tu aliud* ‘As for your query about the title, I make no doubt that καθήκον is ‘duty’, unless you have some other suggestion’. This example underlines the contrast between the treatment of Greek words in letters and in the philosophical dialogues.

Cicero gives some commentary on his linguistic techniques and attitudes. The prologue of *De Finibus*, for example, defends and promotes the practice of translation (even whilst arguing that Cicero’s final product is more than this). Cicero claims that in translating works of philosophy from Greek into Latin, *mererer de meis ciuibus* ‘I would be worthy of credit from my fellow-citizens’ (*Fin.* 1.7) (Chapter 4). He sets up his Latin philosophy as a patriotic project: his reference to pleasing Roman citizens is striking in light of the link between language and citizenship explored in Chapter 5. Towards the beginning of *De Natura Deorum* (1.8–9), he proudly announces that he has succeeded in making sure that Greek does not have a monopoly: *quo in genere tantum profecisse uidemur ut a Graecis ne uerborum quidem copia uinceremur* ‘in this domain we seem to have progressed so far that we are not beaten by the Greeks even in the richness of their vocabulary’.¹²

¹⁰ On Greek in Cicero’s speeches, see Laurand 1936–8: 72–4; Oksala 1953: 90–109 is a study of loanwords in Cicero’s letters; Hutchinson 1998: 13.

¹¹ Adams 2003b: 202–3.

¹² For Cicero as a philosopher, see, for example, Powell 1995, with specific discussion of his use of Greek in Powell’s own chapter.

As we saw in [Chapter 1](#), in *De Officiis* (1.111) Cicero explicitly criticized the practice of code-switching:

ut enim sermone eo debemus uti, qui innatus est nobis, ne ut quidam Graeca uerba inculcantes iure optimo rideamur, sic in actiones omnemque uitam nullam discrepantiam conferre debemus.

For just as we ought to employ our native tongue, in case, like certain people who continually force in Greek words, we attract perfectly justified ridicule, so we ought not to introduce any discordance into our actions and entire life.

The terms of this criticism are strong: the verb *inulco* carries the sense of an act of violence or force. These concerns do not, however, seem to have held within the epistolary genre. Roughly one in every ten instances of the Greek code-switching within Cicero's letters consists of quotation from Atticus, Quintus or other named contemporary figures ([Chapter 2](#)). Although it is difficult to determine the original context of this code-switching with certainty, much of it probably came from their letters to Cicero. The small corpus of extant letters to Cicero offers evidence to support this conclusion. Even within this limited sample, there is evidence of similar, and similarly varied, patterns and usages of Greek to those of Cicero. [Table 25](#) and [Table 26](#) (Appendix) show the distribution of this Greek across functional categories. This evidence for switches into Greek within the letters of Cicero's contemporaries suggest that code-switching was probably a normal discourse mode in the epistolary exchanges of the educated Roman elite, to put it in the sociolinguistic terms discussed in [Chapter 2](#).¹³

The question then is what the presence of code-switching in letters, when it was discouraged or avoided in other texts, suggests about the nature of Cicero's epistolography and its language. A passage from one of his letters to Paetus (*Fam.* 1X.21.1), in which Cicero self-consciously reviews his epistolary style, is often taken as evidence that different standards of language applied in letters, as we saw in [Chapter 2](#). The characterization of the language of Cicero's letters there as *plebeio*

¹³ On intellectual life in the Late Roman Republic, see Corbeill 2013 and Rawson 1985.

sermone and *cottidianis uerbis* has been seen as particularly significant: it highlights the colloquial, conversational and ‘everyday’ nature of the letters.¹⁴ Scholars have argued that it is precisely these attributes that encourage the appearance of code-switching.¹⁵ Clackson is, however, right to be sceptical of the labels that Cicero applies to the language of the letters in this passage: neither the linguistic reality behind them nor their unique applicability to the genre of letters is clear-cut.¹⁶ The characteristics of informality and conversationality, and their complexities in relation to the language of letters, were considered in [Chapter 2](#) and will be developed in [Chapter 5](#).

Cicero’s letters themselves consist of a number of different types and genres, and the level of informality and conversationality varies considerably across them. The use of Greek to an extent mirrors the variations in audience and topic, appearing more often in letters on light-hearted conversational subjects and less often in those on more formal subjects such as letters of commendation.¹⁷ These conventions, however, are not absolute, and the Greek has a strong effect where they are broken. Perhaps the best example of this is Cicero’s letter to Caesar of May or June 45, described explicitly as being *genere nouo* (*Fam.* XIII.15). Here, the deployment of a series of Greek literary quotations adds politicized layers to a letter of recommendation (see below, pp. 135, 170–1).¹⁸

The association that Cicero draws between letters and everyday conversational language at *Ad Familiares* IX.21.1 nonetheless remains important to the way that letters, and the code-switching within them, operated. Letters worked because they could be both informal and conversational in style, and capable of dealing with serious and critical matters. Code-switching was one strategy for exploiting this ambiguity: Greek

¹⁴ On orality in Cicero’s letters, see Biville 2003.

¹⁵ Adams 2003a: 310 suggests that the private, conversational nature of the letters provided the context for code-switching.

¹⁶ Clackson 2015a: 104–5.

¹⁷ Adams 2003a: 308–9.

¹⁸ Shackleton Bailey 1977: vol. II: 458; Swain 2002: 160. On Cicero’s practice of quotation in the letters, in both Greek and Latin, see Behrendt 2013. Regrettably, I became aware of this book too late for the publication of this volume and was not able to consult it.

could be used both to signal Cicero's light-hearted conversational tone and to convey or underline more serious or contentious content. We see this effect in his epistolary relationships with Caesar, Pompey and Appius Claudius (discussed below, pp. 153–72).

The *sociolinguistic* concept of markedness (i.e. the extent to which linguistic choices are expected and appropriate (unmarked) or not (marked) in a particular context – a concept quite different from the concept of *linguistic* markedness originating in the Prague School) has been used extensively in modern code-switching studies and provides one framework for measuring the varied effect of Greek in the letters.¹⁹ It also further demonstrates the complexity of the relationship between code-switching and genre. Although the epistolary genre allowed code-switching as a possible choice, it did not dictate the markedness and effect of this choice on individual occasions. Understanding the markedness of Cicero's Greek requires an understanding of the place of Greek both within and beyond letters.²⁰ Attitudes such as that expressed in *De Officiis* do not evaporate completely in an epistolary context, but instead contribute to the potential impact of Greek in the letters.

Both Adams and Swain stress the complexity and ambiguity of attitudes to Greek within the Late Republic, but they come down on different sides in assessing the impact of these attitudes to Greek on the markedness of Greek in the letters. Adams is convinced that, for the Roman elite, there was an underlying 'cultural markedness ... of Greek and things Greek',²¹ and that 'code-switching into Greek by educated Romans was always a marked choice, even if carried out in private with a

¹⁹ On distinctions between these two uses of the term 'markedness', see Winter 1989: 105.

²⁰ For discussions of language use and attitudes in the Late Republic more widely, see, for example, Gruen 1992; Kaimio 1979; Rochette 1997; Wallace-Hadrill 2008.

²¹ Adams 2003a: 412. One may link Adams' understanding of 'cultural markedness' partly to his emphasis on the 'cultural inferiority' that Romans felt towards the Greeks, see Adams 2003a: 309. He does not unpack the origins of this 'cultural markedness' further in relation to the Roman elite at this point.

sympathetic peer'.²² By contrast, Swain argues that display of Greek in contexts that allowed it was a signal of Cicero's confidence in Roman superiority over the conquered Greeks, and that code-switching in letters to Atticus could therefore be an 'unmarked' choice within Latin rhetorical strategies.²³ In our view, the degree of 'markedness' of Cicero's code-switching in the letters was not fixed, and he plays on this, bringing the markedness of Greek into and out of focus, as we shall see below, pp. 143–8.²⁴

Script and Manuscript

Our task of identifying code-switches is complicated by thorny questions concerning script-switching: did ancient authors themselves engage in script-switching? Is a change in script a necessary and/or sufficient indication of a switch between languages? What is the relationship between language and script? The manuscript tradition presents an additional layer of complexity: as Pelttari has discussed, scribes, seeing words that they recognized as Greek within a manuscript, 'hyper-corrected' them into Greek script more commonly than has previously been supposed.²⁵ This matters because script choices are one important indicator of how a word, and the extent of its integration within a language, was perceived by its writer and reader.²⁶ If we only have access to the script choices of medieval scribes, we only see their perceptions of script and language use rather than classical authors' own.²⁷

Aside from a few fragments, the earliest manuscripts of Cicero's *Ad Atticum* date from the fourteenth century and

²² Adams 2003a: 163–4.

²³ Swain 2002: 163–4.

²⁴ The 'flagging' of a switch with metalinguistic commentary was one obvious way to mark it out, see Adams 2003a: 319.

²⁵ Pelttari 2011. He also acknowledges the existence of hyper-correction in the opposite direction (from Greek script to Latin script).

²⁶ This theme is discussed further in Chapter 5.

²⁷ On script (or 'alphabet') switching in Cicero's letters, see O'Sullivan 2019. He presents a more optimistic view, arguing that the manuscripts of Cicero on the whole transmit Cicero's script choices reliably.

there is therefore a substantial gap between the original writing of the letters and our records of them.²⁸ It is at the same time worth noting that, since many of Cicero's letters were dictated to scribes, there would always have been a potential disconnect between the oral composition of a letter and its written form.²⁹ For practical reasons, in particular the ability to compare the data from studies by Adams (2003a), Jackson (2014) and Swain (2002), we therefore followed Shackleton Bailey's use of Greek script in his editions as an indicator of code-switching. For the purpose of the creation of the database, we count a code-switch every time a word or series of words appears printed in Greek script, and therefore inflected as Greek, in Shackleton Bailey's Cambridge edition of the text.³⁰ This is the same principle on which Adams and Swain base their calculation of the frequency of Cicero's Greek, although Adams counts individual Greek words whereas we count code-switches.³¹

Even in the hands of an editor and textual critic as experienced as Shackleton Bailey, decisions on script are never unproblematic. Indeed Shackleton Bailey's sometimes imaginative 'conjectural criticism' did not always prioritize careful

²⁸ The manuscript tradition of the letters *Ad Familiares* fares slightly better, with the earliest extant manuscript dating from the ninth century. A late antique palimpsest is also extant. For a summary of the manuscript tradition of Cicero's letters, see Reynolds 1983: 135–42.

²⁹ White 2010: 15–16. The impact of dictation on our ability to access 'Cicero's' script choices is neglected in O'Sullivan 2019.

³⁰ Where Cicero's Greek is interrupted by a brief conjunction or phrase in Latin (as in σκήψεις *atque* ἀναβολαί, *Att.* 1.12) but is clearly a continuous semantic unit, it has been counted as a single code-switch (Chapter 2).

³¹ Adams 2003a: 342: 'for the sake of simplicity, I mean words printed in Shackleton Bailey's edition in Greek script and therefore inflected as Greek'. In Shackleton Bailey's edition, Greek script seems to have been used to indicate clearly Greek words. Adams regards morphology (independently of script choices) as an important indicator of code-switching rather than borrowing; see Adams 2003a: 25–9, and especially 26. Swain 2002: 146 n. 46 says that 'in discussing Cicero's practice I have followed Shackleton Bailey's judgement as to when he used Greek script to write Greek'. Swain also seems more willing to see script, in itself, as an indicator of full-blown code-switching: '[f]or Cicero a borrowing could easily become a code-switch again by a simple change of alphabet' (157). Swain's discussion of *Att.* vii.3.10 (Swain 2002: 155–8), in which Cicero frets over the acceptability of writing the Graecized *Piraeae*, however, nicely highlights some of the complexities of script and morphology, and the lack of fixedness of these choices.

reading of manuscript and created highly emended texts.³² Given, however, that the manuscripts themselves do not necessarily represent Cicero's own script choices anyway, relying on an expert in Cicero's language and performance to identify instances of Greek is not unreasonable. In order to check how many Greek code-switches may have been left by Shackleton Bailey in Latin script, we undertook a script-blind study of the first four books of letters to Atticus.³³ The numbers of words in Latin script that are potentially Greek code-switches are few in comparison with the volume of code-switching in Greek script across the corpus as a whole: in the first four books, we counted around a dozen possible single-word Greek code-switches printed in Latin script in Shackleton Bailey's text (e.g. *myrothecium* (*Att.* 11.1.1) and *anagnostes* (1.12.4))³⁴ in comparison to 178 code-switches in Greek script. Conducting a similar analysis across all of Cicero's extant correspondence would probably not substantially change our understanding of the overall patterns of code-switching. The dozen code-switches in Latin script in the first four books covered a similar range of functions to those in Greek script.³⁵

The 'script-blind' study does, however, nicely illustrate the complexities of language and script. The passage below provides one good example:

sed Boopidis nostrae consanguineus non mediocris terrores iacit atque denuntiat et Sampsicramo negat, ceteris prae se fert et ostentat. (*Att.* 11.23.3)

³² See Thomas 2008, especially 16–17. O'Sullivan (2019: 500) is also sceptical of modern editions, arguing that they are too ready to print Greek script where the manuscripts have Latin script. This latter issue is less of a problem for us, since we do not regard the presence or absence of Greek script as the decisive marker of code-switching, and Shackleton Bailey's method captures words that are morphologically Greek.

³³ The first four books of the letters to Atticus were chosen as an initial starting point for this analysis because they present a manageable portion of text that covers a broad chronological period. Additionally, they include the letters from exile (Book 11): the complete absence of code-switching during this period has been noted (Adams 2003a: 343; Swain 2002: 149) and it is therefore useful to look at the language of the exile letters more broadly (see the discussion below, pp. 136–42).

³⁴ In the first case the word has a Latin ending. See Chapter 2 for a discussion of the relevance of morphology in deciding between code-switching and borrowing.

³⁵ The breakdown of functions across these switches is as follows: Code (3); GCS Architecture (1); GCS Education (1); GCS Politics (1); GCS Literature/Grammar/Rhetoric (3); Quotation: proverbial (1); Referential (2); Wordplay (1); Wordplay? (1).

But the kin of our ‘Ox-Eyes’ throws out and foretells not inconsiderable threats, and she denies them before Sampsiceramus, but shows them off before others. (trans. author)³⁶

The word *Boopidis* carries a significant dimension of Greekness; it is an allusion to Homer that demands engagement in Greek literary culture from the reader. Here, however, it appears in Latin script and with Latin inflection (*Boopidis* for Βοώπιδος), hence Shackleton Bailey’s decision not to print it in Greek script in his text.³⁷ Shackleton Bailey raises some concerns about the script and the manuscript tradition in his commentary, noting that the manuscript cannot be trusted on the rendering of *Boopidis*.³⁸ The appearance of *Boopidis* in Latin script here marks a contrast to the other appearances of the name.³⁹ *Boopidis* is not the only word to appear sometimes in one script and sometimes in another.⁴⁰ *Teucris* (apparently a code name for an agent of C. Antonius, from whom Cicero was trying to recover a loan) appears in Latin script in Shackleton Bailey’s text at *Att.* 1.12.1 and at *Att.* 1.13.5, but in Greek script in at *Att.* 1.14.7.

The question is how far this inconsistency needs to be a problem. It can be argued that dilemmas over script highlight an important point about how languages interrelated in the ancient world. We tend towards a binary attitude to language that regards words as being either part of one language or another (and hence properly written in one script or another). Our eagerness for standardization leads us to expect the same of the ancient evidence, despite the fact that this is perhaps unreasonable. Words do not occupy fixed positions in relation to a language; as has been discussed in [Chapters 1](#) and [2](#), and is further explored in [Chapters 4](#) and [5](#), code-switching operates on a continuum. Script use, and the boundary between different languages and scripts, was flexible in the ancient world.⁴¹

³⁶ ‘Ox-Eyes’ refers to Clodia; her *consanguineus* is her brother P. Clodius, with whom Cicero had a long-running feud.

³⁷ For consistency we have therefore also not included it in the database.

³⁸ Shackleton Bailey 1965–70: vol. 1: 398.

³⁹ *Att.* 11.9.1; 11.12.2; 11.14.1; 11.22.5.

⁴⁰ Common nouns and adjectives (other than proper nouns) printed sometimes in Latin and sometimes in Greek script in the manuscripts are the focus of O’Sullivan 2019.

⁴¹ Peltari 2011: 480 suggests that one reason for this was the similarity of many ancient Greek and Latin scripts.

The flexibility between languages and scripts may be especially potent in the case of Cicero. Cicero appears to have been responsible for coining a number of new Latin words, above all in philosophy, and regularly provides the first, and in some cases only, evidence of Greek words within Latin literature, even if our fragmentary remains mean that we may exaggerate his originality.⁴² He functions as a reference point for our study of later authors: if a Greek word appears Latinized in Cicero, we may deem it less likely to be a code-switch in later texts. Obviously, we do not have the same luxury of a point of reference for Cicero himself, making the task of identifying his code-switches all the more difficult. All of this makes it unsurprising that we should find inconsistencies in the text: it is to an extent Cicero who is setting the standards of language and script, even if his role in this is complicated by the fact that some of his letters were dictated to scribes.⁴³ A script-blind study of the word *sittybas*, found in Latin literature only in the letters to Atticus, gives insight into this process in action. It appears explicitly flagged as Greek in the following:

iisque imperes ut sumant membranulam ex qua indices fiant, quos uos Graeci, ut opinor, σιττύβας appellatis. (Att. IV.4a.1)

And tell them to bring a bit of parchment for the labels, *sittybae* as I believe you Greeks call them.

It appears twice more in chronologically later letters, both times with Latin morphology and not flagged as Greek: *nihil uenustius quam illa tua pegmata, postquam sittybae libros illustrarunt* (Att. IV.8.2) ‘Those shelves of yours are the last word in elegance, now that the labels have brightened up the volumes’, and *bibliothecam mihi tui pinxerunt cum structione et sittybis* (Att. IV.5.3) ‘Your

⁴² See Steele 1900: 404–9 for examples of Greek words found only in Cicero.

⁴³ Att. VII.3.10 shows, however, that Cicero did have to make some concession to expected linguistic norms: *uenio ad ‘Piraeae’, in quo magis reprehendendus sum quod homo Romanus ‘Piraeae’ scripserim, non ‘Piraeum’ (sic enim omnes nostri locutio sunt) quam quod addiderim <‘in’>* ‘Now I come to Piraeus, in which matter as a Roman I am more open to criticism for writing Piraeae instead of Piraeum, the form universally used by our countrymen, than for adding the preposition’. The passage is discussed in Swain 2002: 155–58. There is further discussion of linguistic standards and authorities, and individual practices in relation to these, in Chapter 5.

people have painted my library together with the bookcases and labels'. It is possible that what we are seeing here is the process of integration of a Greek word. *σιττύβας* starts off as a code-switch, deliberately flagged, but, after its initial appearance, is accepted as a borrowing and confirmed as such via a change of inflection and, perhaps, script.⁴⁴ The shift occurs between letters written within a few days of one another in June 56. In the context of the epistolary conversation between Atticus and Cicero, one that often played with and between languages, the progression from flagged code-switch to adopted loanword would have seemed a natural one. The strength of the desire to control language is indicated by the fact that Cicero chooses to deploy a code-switch at all. As Adams notes, the absence of a suitable word in Latin was not, by itself, sufficient condition for code-switching.⁴⁵ Here, Cicero's initial use of a flagged code-switch is perhaps prompted by the association of the word with the Greek cultural sphere of literary terminology and Cicero's desire to draw attention to Atticus' own Greekness (on which see p. 144).

Being guided by the script choices of Shackleton Bailey enables us to identify the vast majority of Cicero's full-blown switches into Greek. This excursus on script and manuscript has though revealed the complex layers of language beyond this and has enabled us to see Cicero's code-switching as an active process of playing between languages rather than a static phenomenon. This theme will emerge again when we consider his wordplay, which often drew upon the relationship between languages for its wit and effect (pp. 148–53).

Constructing Categories and Vocabularies

Determining the functions of Cicero's code-switching is one of the most useful parts of our quantitative analysis for the kinds of questions being pursued in this chapter, but also one of the most challenging. Adams (2003a) and Swain (2002) have proved

⁴⁴ Pelttari 2011: 465 points out that flagging is usually a firm indication that a word is being treated as Greek rather than as a loanword. On flagging, see further Chapter 5.

⁴⁵ Adams 2003a: 338.

to be important guides in determining different functions of Cicero's code-switching. Since, however, neither scholar aimed to categorize the corpus as a whole, but instead drew out a selection of functions from across the letters, the functions they outline are not sufficient when looking at the whole corpus systematically. In order to fill gaps and categorize the remainder of the evidence, categories from modern sociolinguistics have been adopted, alongside those that emerged naturally from the evidence.⁴⁶ The list of functions and their definitions, across all four authors, is presented in [Chapter 1](#).

As discussed in [Chapters 1](#) and [2](#), we also need to think about how the immediate, or 'local', functions that feature in the database interact with other, higher-level, or 'global', functions of the code-switching. Some of these higher-level functions (distancing, solidarity) are familiar from previous analyses of Cicero's Greek.⁴⁷ The code-switching also both reflects and shapes some of the broader functions of the correspondence. White defines these functions neatly: letters sought both to accomplish an immediate practical task (recommendation, redress of a grievance, delivery of news) and to cultivate a relationship over a long period and/or distance, for which the careful maintenance of the image of both author and reader was essential.⁴⁸ Awareness of the ways that code-switching works in relation to these broader functions and frameworks is essential to the historical questions of this chapter.

Through our attempts to categorize Cicero's Greek, we also see the overlap between different categories and vocabularies, perhaps most visibly in the different categories of switches within the function of the 'Greek cultural sphere' (GCS). As Clark demonstrates, the fluidity of categories was a central feature of Roman republican culture and communication; although spheres or categories such as politics and philosophy were separable, and this separation mattered, vocabularies

⁴⁶ Callahan [2004](#): 16. She too describes (74) how new categories emerge 'in response to the evidence'. For further discussion of Callahan's approach, see [Chapter 2](#).

⁴⁷ On 'distancing' and 'euphemism' in Cicero's Greek, see Adams [2003a](#): 330–4; on solidarity, see Adams [2003a](#): 312; Mäkilähde and Rissanen [2016](#); Swain [2002](#): 164.

⁴⁸ White [2010](#): 23.

from these different spheres were often shared across them.⁴⁹ Clark illustrates this via an exploration of 'religious' elements in Cicero's letters, showing for example how Cicero used his discussion of Atticus' shrine to Amalthea to communicate his opinion on wider issues, including his own political position and actions.⁵⁰ Similarly, McConnell explores the way that philosophy was used in broader discussions, both personal and political, within the letters: he gives as one example *Att.* VI.9, in which Greek philosophical vocabulary is used to discuss Cicero's triumph and the administration of his province.⁵¹ Greek was an important vehicle for making allusions to different spheres and vocabularies, and for combining them. Breaking the code-switching down into its different functions and then reassembling it in context enables us to see the overlap between categories and vocabularies within Cicero's epistolary exchanges. Cicero's communication to and about Caesar (see below pp. 165–72) offers one example of the ways that different categories and vocabularies worked together.

Patterns and Totals in Cicero's Code-Switching

A macro-level analysis of Cicero's code-switching provides insights into a number of areas: the frequency of code-switching, the proportion of inter- and intra-sentential code-switching (significant because of the relationship between these different types of code-switching and the problematic concept of 'intimacy'), the range of different functions of Cicero's code-switching, and the degree of its markedness. It is also possible to consider how these aspects varied over time and across the different letter collections (*Ad Atticum*, *Ad Familiares* and *Ad Quintum fratrem*). In part, the patterns described confirm the findings of Adams and Swain, but they do so from a firmer empirical basis. Our quantitative analysis supplies the

⁴⁹ Clark 2013. Hoffer 2007 considers Cicero's use of repeated allusive expressions to express political resentment.

⁵⁰ Clark 2013: 10.

⁵¹ McConnell 2014: 153–5. At 109–12, he discusses the practice of code-switching specifically (see further below, pp. 154, 168).

backdrop for reading code-switching in more detail later in the chapter: it makes it possible to pinpoint where and how the code-switching in particular epistolary relationships and at particular moments in time differs from the norms set out here.

In total, there are 978 code-switches within the letters.⁵² Of these, 824 appear in the corpus *Ad Atticum*, 113 in the collection *Ad Familiares* (to twenty-three different correspondents), forty in the collection *Ad Quintum fratrem* and one in the collection *Ad Brutum*.⁵³ The vast majority of the switches occur in letters written by Cicero, but thirteen of the switches in *Ad Familiares* occur in letters addressed to him from Cassius, Caelius, Trebonius, Lentulus Spinther, Cassius Parmensis and Manius Curius, five appear in letters from Cicero's son Marcus to Tiro, and two in letters from Quintus Cicero to Tiro. One code-switch appears in a letter from Antony to Cicero included in letters *Ad Atticum*. As discussed above (p. 117), these switches are useful in indicating wider norms of code-switching.

That Cicero code-switches more frequently in letters to Atticus than in letters to other correspondents is well known. Figures are crude, but there are on average 1.2 code-switches per page across the letters *Ad Atticum*.⁵⁴ Across all the letters

⁵² Although including them in the database for reference, we exclude from our quantitative analysis the three passages of extended Greek in *Att.* vi.4, vi.5.1–2 and ix.4 as examples of code-alternation rather than code-switching; on this distinction see Mullen 2013c: 26 n. 19. Swain 2002: 148 n. 54 also excludes these passages from his analysis.

⁵³ The single code-switch to Brutus is counted amongst the *Ad Familiares* totals in Table 23 (Appendix) but the collection *Ad Brutum* is not included in the calculations of the frequency of code-switching below.

⁵⁴ Averages were calculated by dividing the total number of Latin pages in Shackleton Bailey's Loeb editions (Shackleton Bailey 1999, 2001, 2002) by the total number of code-switches. Numbers therefore vary from Swain 2002: 150–1: he used the Cambridge edition of the text and employs a different method for estimating frequency, calculating the percentage of pages on which a code-switch would appear if they were distributed equally. He calculates that code-switches appear on 17 per cent of pages of letters to Caelius, 55 per cent of pages of letters to Quintus, and 122 per cent, 206 per cent and 125 per cent of pages in Books 5–7 of *Ad Atticum* respectively. Adams 2003a: 342–3 provides some quantification of the frequency of code-switching over time: he uses a similar method to that employed here, calculating the numbers of code-switches per ten pages of Shackleton Bailey's text. Crucially, however, he counts single Greek words rather than code-switches. For further discussion of Adams' figures, see below (p. 136) in the section on the chronology of code-switching. Hutchinson 1998: 14 gives the amount of code-switching as a percentage of pages of Teubner text on which Greek appears: his figures (102 per cent for *Att.*, 19 per cent for *Fam.*, and 58 per cent for *Q. fr.*) are not dissimilar to those given here; he, however, excludes the 'formal' *Q. fr.* 1.1).

The Intimacy of Code-Switching

Ad Familiares, there are on average 0.17 code-switches per page; if only letters to those correspondents that receive any code-switching at all are counted, this figure rises to 0.3. The letters to Quintus contain an average of 0.4 code-switches per page. These figures do not seem to justify the distinction that Swain sets up between the amount of code-switching to Quintus and that to friends, to whom he claims '[Cicero] uses virtually no Greek'.⁵⁵ Swain does not calculate the frequency of code-switching across *Ad Familiares* as a whole, but instead gives figures only for letters to Caelius; Adams has remarked that the surprisingly low amount of code-switching to Caelius is not representative of the letters *Ad Familiares* as a whole.⁵⁶ This is a reminder that comparison across the different letter collections is complicated by the fact that in regarding the letters *Ad Familiares* as a monolith, one amalgamates correspondents as varied in their relationship to Cicero as Caesar, Appius Claudius, Caelius and Terentia.⁵⁷

The Intimacy of Code-Switching

A striking feature of Cicero's code-switching is the dominance of intra-sentential switches; they make up just over 90 per cent of switches in the letters overall.⁵⁸ This high proportion of intra-sentential switching in Cicero's letters is worth interrogating because of the assumed link between intra-sentential switching and 'intimacy', and specifically between the practice of code-switching and the 'intimate' nature of Cicero's relationships.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ Swain 2002: 150.

⁵⁶ Adams 2003a: 316 n. 38.

⁵⁷ On code-switching to Terentia, see Adams 2003a: 316 n. 38; at 416 he denies a link between Cicero's pattern of code-switching to her and gender. See also Wenskus 2001 for a discussion of code-switching and gender. This theme is also discussed in Chapter 5.

⁵⁸ For a comparison of proportions of inter- and intra-sentential switching across the corpora, see Chapter 2.

⁵⁹ On the relationship between code-switching and intimacy in general, see Mullen 2013a: 88; Poplack 1980: 589–90 and Chapter 2. On the relationship between code-switching and 'intimacy' in Roman literature, see Dubuisson 1992: 193 (who describes Greek as 'la langue de l'intimité'); Jocelyn 1999: 187; Wenskus 1998: 8.

On the surface, the dominance of intra-sentential switching in Cicero's letters may be said to prove the high level of intimacy in his correspondence: it is a reflection of the fact that code-switching, in its intra-sentential form, was appropriate to in-group contexts, of which Cicero's letters, above all those to particular 'intimates' such as Atticus and Quintus, are good examples. This, however, would be to construct a self-validating argument, and one that relies on a conflation of slightly different meanings of the term 'intimate': Poplack's initial application of the term to signify a grammatically 'complex' code-switching that was a marker of 'in-group' communication,⁶⁰ and the slightly broader, more emotive meaning of the term adopted in work such as that by Dunkel and Dubuisson that connects Cicero's Greek to moments of high emotion and to relationships with a high degree of mutual affection.⁶¹ Adams has expressed scepticism about explaining Cicero's code-switching in these terms.⁶²

It is of note that the proportions of intra-sentential switching vary little across the three collections *Ad Atticum*, *Ad Familiares* and *Ad Quintum fratrem*, accounting for 92 per cent, 87 per cent and 88 per cent of the total switches respectively. Despite the variety of correspondents included in the *Ad Familiares* totals, inter-sentential switching is not significantly more prominent across this corpus than in letters to Atticus and Quintus that have been labelled and explained as being highly intimate.⁶³ These patterns suggest the need to question the relationship between code-switching and intimacy further.

To do so, we can reframe the terms and terminology of the debate slightly. Communicative strategies in the letters

⁶⁰ Poplack 1980: 589.

⁶¹ Dubuisson 1980, 1992: 193; Dunkel 2000: 128.

⁶² Adams 2003a: 309–11. He, however, focuses more on the linguistic than the historical evidence.

⁶³ Swain 2002: 151 argues that the code-switching in letters to Quintus and Atticus demonstrates that 'real friendship is an important basis for code-switching'. For an overview of the relationship between Atticus and Cicero, see especially Shackleton Bailey 1965–70: vol. I: 3–59.

were not just expressions or reflections of intimacy in general terms, but were required as part of the display of *amicitia* that ran through Cicero's letters, including those to Atticus and Quintus. *Amicitia* carried a set of formal structures and expectations, of which expressions of intimacy were one part.⁶⁴ As Brunt argues, *amicitia* could conceal a wide range of different types of relationship of varying degrees of closeness, but its boundaries and expectations had to be respected in social interactions. Getting around these expectations required careful linguistic negotiation, as we shall see below. The impact of *amicitia* on the language of the letters more broadly has been discussed, but it has rarely been considered in relation to Cicero's code-switching in particular.⁶⁵ Taking account of the expectations of *amicitia* allows us to recast the debate on 'intimacy' in Roman frameworks and to see how Greek worked in the manipulation of these. The final section of this chapter will examine patterns of code-switching in particular epistolary relationships, considering them in their immediate context, and against their wider social frameworks and political circumstances.

Functions of Code-Switching

Tables 22–4 (Appendix) give a full breakdown of the distribution of the different functions of Cicero's code-switching both across the letters as a whole and within the different letter collections *Ad Atticum*, *Ad Familiares* and *Ad Quintum fratrem*: here we draw out some of the most striking patterns. This analysis provides an overview of the ways that Greek worked across Cicero's letters and sheds further light on the similarities and differences between his use of Greek to different

⁶⁴ There is a wealth of bibliography on *amicitia*: two classic accounts are Brunt 1988 and Saller 1982. Verboven 2011 also offers a useful overview.

⁶⁵ On *amicitia* in the letters, see Konstan 1997; Williams 2012. Rollinger 2015 also states the relevance of the framework of *amicitia* for our understanding of Cicero's code-switching. Unfortunately, we became aware of this publication after this chapter was completed and have only been able to make brief references to it.

addressees. It again forms an important backdrop to our close analysis of Greek in particular epistolary relationships later in the chapter, making it possible to pinpoint where and how patterns of Greek vary.

As the briefest glance through the range of types of code-switching shows, Cicero's Greek was put to wide and creative use within the letters. This variety is consistently commented upon,⁶⁶ but has never been illustrated systematically; examples are usually cherry-picked to illustrate particular types and are not compared against the corpus as a whole.⁶⁷ Across all the letters, sixteen different functions of code-switch appear, in comparison with twelve categories in Suetonius, nine in Fronto and eight in Pliny.⁶⁸ Three of these functions, code, commentary and greeting, are unique to Cicero amongst the authors considered in this volume. The variety of Cicero's code-switching can also be demonstrated by the fact that individual functions are less dominant in Cicero than in either Pliny or Fronto. The top two functions of code-switching in Fronto's letters ('GCS' and 'Quotation') together account for around 87 per cent of the total, whilst in Pliny's letters, the top two functions ('GCS' and 'Quotation') together account for around 90 per cent of the total (see [Chapter 2](#)). The top two functions of Cicero's code-switching ('Quotation' and 'GCS') by contrast account for just over half of the total (for a breakdown of the most frequently occurring categories across the different Ciceronian letter collections, see [Table 17](#)).

Paradoxically, this systematic analysis of the functions of Cicero's Greek also reveals that a second consequence of the cherry-picking of particular functions in previous scholarship has been to overemphasize the variety and creativity of Cicero's code-switching. Although the dominance of single categories is significantly less than in other authors, over 70 per cent of the code-switching across the letters can be categorized as 'Description', 'Metalinguistic', 'Quotation' or 'GCS'. Only

⁶⁶ See, for example, Adams 2003a: 308 on the 'diversity' of code-switching.

⁶⁷ Adams 2003a: 308; Swain 2002: 151.

⁶⁸ Note that the totals here do not include the subcategories of the functions 'GCS', 'Quotation' and 'Naming'.

Functions of Code-Switching

Table 17 *Five most frequently attested functions of code-switching, and their percentages, in Ad Atticum, Ad Familiares and Ad Quintum fratrem*

	<i>Ad Atticum</i>	<i>Ad Familiares</i>	<i>Ad Quintum fratrem</i>
1	Quotation (27 per cent)	GCS (37 per cent)	Quotation (45 per cent)
2	GCS (22 per cent)	Quotation (24 per cent)	Metalinguistic (18 per cent)
3	Description (15 per cent)	Description (11 per cent)	GCS (12 per cent)
4	Referential (9 per cent)	Metalinguistic (10 per cent)	Description (6 per cent)
5	Metalinguistic (8 per cent)	Referential (5 per cent)	Naming (6 per cent)

two further categories ('Referential' and 'Naming') each account for more than 5 per cent of the total. Elements of Cicero's code-switching that have attracted the most attention within the secondary literature represent a small proportion of the code-switching as a whole: punning and coding for example account for miniscule amounts of the totals.⁶⁹

The difference in the volume of code-switching makes comparison of functions of code-switching across the collections less secure than comparison of intra and inter-sentential switches: a single functional token in *Ad Atticum* represents approximately 0.1 per cent of the total, whilst a single functional token in *Ad Familiares* represents 0.8 per cent and in *Ad Quintum fratrem* 2 per cent. Nonetheless, the different proportions in Table 17 are indicative of some of the similarities and differences in the use of Greek across the different letter collections.

As with the distribution of intra-sentential switching, the underlying patterns and functions of Greek are similar across the different collections. Table 17 summarizes the top five functions, and their percentages, in each of the three

⁶⁹ On Greek as the language of conspiracy: see Adams 2003a: 329–30; Dunkel 2000: 128.

Ciceronian letter collections. The same few categories are dominant within all three corpora, albeit to slightly differing extents. The distribution of functions is particularly similar in *Ad Atticum* and *Ad Familiares*, and the three Ciceronian corpora are more similar to one another in this respect than they are to the letters of Pliny and Fronto ([Chapter 2](#)). These broad similarities offer further reminders of the need to be cautious about the extent to which we regard the code-switching in the letters to Quintus and Atticus as being unique.

The overview of the different functions does, however, also illustrate some differences. There are indications that code-switching within the letters to Atticus is more varied and creative: the categories self-description, greeting and question appear in the Ciceronian corpus only in letters to Atticus.⁷⁰ In total, the letters to Atticus contain sixteen different categories of code-switch compared to eleven categories in *Ad Familiares* and ten categories in *Ad Quintum*.⁷¹ The significance of this is considered further in the detailed discussion of Cicero and Atticus' epistolary relationship below.

Other categories appear more frequently in some corpora than others. The category of 'Greek cultural sphere' (GCS) is interesting here: the proportions of GCS (particularly medical, financial and philosophical terms) are higher in *Ad Familiares* than in the other corpora (37 per cent compared to 22 per cent in *Ad Atticum* and 12 per cent in *Ad Quintum fratrem*). Particularly noteworthy is the dominance of philosophical terms in this collection: they make up just under half of the total code-switches in the category of GCS in the letters *Ad Familiares* compared to around 20 per cent of the code-switches in this category in the letters *Ad Atticum*. These terms reflect the 'philosophical badinage' that operated as a common currency amongst Cicero's friends.⁷² This was more prominent in some relationships than others

⁷⁰ The categories code, commentary, description (self-description), discourse marker and greeting also do not appear in any of the other corpora that we analyse in this volume.

⁷¹ For a discussion of how the categories compare across the corpora, see [Chapters 2 and 5](#).

⁷² Griffin 1995; 1997.

and overall totals may be skewed by this: nine of the nineteen code-switches involving philosophical terms appear in letters between Cicero and Cassius. Nonetheless, it is striking that this philosophical vocabulary was less dominant in letters to Atticus particularly in light of the fact that he, like Cassius, was an Epicurean and was teased by Cicero for being such.⁷³ Cicero was apparently calibrating his Greek vocabulary to suit his audience.⁷⁴

Perhaps the best evidence for this argument comes from the letters to Quintus. As [Table 17](#) and [Table 24](#) (Appendix) show, these letters are slightly different in terms of the relative proportions of different functions. Some of this may be down to the relatively small sample size, but the proportions of quotation (45 per cent) are significantly higher than the average across Cicero's letters as a whole. Literary quotations are especially dominant here: they represent just under a quarter of the code-switching in letters to Quintus, compared to 12 per cent of switches in the letters to Atticus and 14 per cent of switches in the letters *Ad Familiares*.

Notably, seven of the ten literary quotations in letters to Quintus (and all but one of the inter-sentential switches) appear in the letters dated to 54, when Quintus was serving in Gaul as Caesar's legate. The similarities between the patterns of code-switching here and in Cicero's letter to Caesar (*Fam.* XIII.15) provide evidence to support Henderson's attractive argument that Caesar was the 'true' recipient of Cicero's letter to his brother in this period.⁷⁵ In *Fam.* XIII.5 too, literary quotations are dominant, more so than at any other point in the letters *Ad Familiares*. Not only the function but the type of code-switching is distinct here: in both the letters to Quintus in 54 and Cicero's letters to Caesar, these literary quotations mark a cluster of inter-sentential switches, which is

⁷³ It might, however, be fruitful to consider how the frequency of philosophical vocabulary to Atticus varied over time, in light of McConnell 2014 and his analysis of the place of philosophy in the letters.

⁷⁴ On accommodation to the recipient in Cicero's letters to Cassius, see Adams 2003a: 317–18.

⁷⁵ Henderson 2007. See below, pp. 152–3, for further discussion of the circulation of letters beyond their intended recipient.

unusual across Cicero's letters as a whole. More generally, it is a reminder of the way in which function, audience and context interact to shape Cicero's use of language.

Chronological Variation in Cicero's Code-Switching

Given the numbers of switches involved, a detailed analysis of the variation in function and frequency across time is most practicable for the letters to Atticus. Previous scholarship has noted that the frequency of Cicero's code-switching is not consistent.⁷⁶ Table 18 shows the numbers of code-switches by year (and, where appropriate, by month) compared with the total pages in the Loeb edition to give an approximation of numbers of code-switches per page across time.⁷⁷ Periods with letters but no code-switches are indicated; periods for which there are no extant letters do not appear.⁷⁸

The patterns drawn are crude and distinctions could be drawn at a more sensitive unit of analysis (ideally at the level of individual letters). Nonetheless the data in Table 18 offer a useful starting point and enable engagement with arguments made in previous studies. Adams argues that variations across time reveal the 'psychological dimension' of Cicero's code-switching: the lack of code-switching during his exile in 58–57, during the Civil War in 48–47 and after the death of his daughter in February 45 demonstrate that code-switching was a light-hearted 'game' that was inappropriate during times of crisis and 'unease'.⁷⁹ Although periods of infrequent code-switching may coincide with low points for Cicero, the variations in frequency are also revealing of a precise function of his code-switching. The code-switching of two periods in particular, January to May 49 and March to May 45, helps to demonstrate this.

⁷⁶ Adams 2003a: 342; Swain 2002: 149.

⁷⁷ Adams 2003a: 342–4 undertakes a similar analysis; it is, however, important that I have counted numbers of code-switches where he has counted individual words.

⁷⁸ On the preservation of the corpus, see Beard 2002; Nicholson 1988.

⁷⁹ Adams 2003a: 343. On the link between code-switching and Cicero's emotional state, see also Cugusi 1983 and Swain 2002: 149–50: 'the temptation is to psychologise: Cicero's code-switching is closely tied to his and correspondents' moods'.

Chronological Variation in Cicero's Code-Switching

Table 18 *Frequency of code-switching in Ad Atticum by date*

Date	No. of code-switches	No. of pages	Average no. of code-switches per page
68	2	3	0.7
67	3	6	0.5
66	0	1	0.0
65	2	4	0.5
61	30	22	1.4
60	37	21	1.8
59	64	64	1.0
58	0	32	0.0
57	1	12	0.1
56	13	6	2.2
55	10	7	1.4
54	15	17	0.9
51	39	32	1.2
50	114	69	1.7
49	156	128	1.2
<i>Jan. 49</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1.3</i>
<i>Feb. 49</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>33</i>	<i>0.7</i>
<i>Mar. 49</i>	<i>75</i>	<i>54</i>	<i>1.4</i>
<i>Apr. 49</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>0.7</i>
<i>May 49</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>2.1</i>
48	0	12	0.0
47	0	24	0.0
46	26	9	2.9
45	149	99	1.5
<i>Mar. 45</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>0.4</i>
<i>May 45</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>31</i>	<i>1.4</i>
<i>Jun. 45</i>	<i>52</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>3.1</i>
<i>Jul. 45</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>1.1</i>
<i>Aug. 45</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>1.8</i>
<i>Dec. 45</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>2.5</i>	<i>4.0</i>
44	161	106	1.5

(continued)

Table 18 (*cont.*)

Date	No. of code-switches	No. of pages	Average no. of code-switches per page
<i>Apr. 44</i>	23	22	1.0
<i>May 44</i>	35	25	1.4
<i>Jun. 44</i>	25	20	1.3
<i>Jul. 44</i>	32	18	1.8
<i>Aug. 44</i>	8	4	2.0
<i>Oct. 44</i>	6	3	2.0
<i>Nov. 44</i>	32	14	2.3

Although January to May 49 was not a period of depression to rival Cicero's exile, it was one of his most acute periods of crisis: Cicero was torn over what course of action to take during the Civil War.⁸⁰ His letters from this time are filled with vacillations and desperate calculations of the correct balance between private and political obligations.⁸¹ Cicero regularly despairs of the situation in emotional language familiar from that during his exile.⁸² He opens a letter of 8 February with the phrase *de malis nostris* (*Att.* VII.21.1), says *angor et crucior* (*Att.* VII.22.1) 'I am distressed and tormented [over Pompey's fate]', and, on hearing that Pompey has departed Italy in March 49, says *ante sollicitus eram et angebar ... nunc autem ... non angor sed ardeo dolore* (*Att.* IX.6.4) 'I was concerned and distressed before ... but now ... I am not just distressed but burn with grief'. At times during the Civil War, Cicero claims that the situation is so difficult that he has nothing to write about: *nihil habeo tanta rerum peturbatione quod scribam* (*Att.* VII.21.3) 'I have nothing to write because things are in such confusion'. This is also a regular theme of his laments in exile; see for

⁸⁰ See Lintott 2008: 281–300 for a narrative of Cicero's decision-making in the civil war using the evidence of the letters.

⁸¹ Brunt 1986. The letters from this period are numbers 132–210 (inclusive) in Shackleton Bailey's edition.

⁸² On the language of Cicero's exile, see Hutchinson 1998: 25–48.

example the end of a letter written on 17 July 58: *non quo plura scribere nec est quod scribam* (*Att.* III.12.3) 'I can't write any more and I have nothing to write about'.⁸³

Both the letters from Cicero's exile and the letters from the early period of the Civil War then show a high level of emotional angst, depicted in similar language in the letters. Given this similarity of language and emotion, it is difficult to see why, on the basis of Cicero's psychological state alone, the early months of 49 should contain large amounts of code-switching and the period of his exile none at all. Thinking about the purpose that his code-switching was meant to serve can, however, help to explain these differences. This purpose is revealed by an analysis of the functions of code-switching employed by Cicero during the early period of the Civil War. During these months, there was a relatively high proportion of literary quotations (16 per cent in comparison with an average of 12 per cent). This type of code-switch could be used to sum up and reflect on the problems Cicero faced: for example, he deploys the Homeric quotation οὕτως που τῶν πρόσθεν ἐπαιθόμεθα κλέα ἀνδρῶν (*Att.* VII.11.4) 'Such the brave tales we've heard of men of old' in making sense of Pompey's abandonment of Rome and comparing his behaviour with that of former leaders, both Greek and Roman, who have had to choose whether or not to abandon a city. The quotation comes at the end of the series of historical precedents, as if to sum up. This illustrates how Cicero's code-switching serves as a method with which to reason through and reflect upon his dilemma in a period of crisis:⁸⁴ it is less hollow than Adams' description of it as a game dropped at times of unease implies.⁸⁵ As Griffin points out, Roman elites naturally used highly technical language to tackle moral problems.⁸⁶ Indeed, Cicero sets out this connection explicitly:

sed tamen, ne me totum aegritudini dedam, sumpsi mihi quasdam tamquam θέσεις, quae et πολιτικά sunt et temporum horum, ut et abducam animum a querelis et in eo ipso de quo agitur exercere. (*Att.* IX.4.1)

⁸³ Translations in this paragraph are my own.

⁸⁴ Jackson's findings about the dominance of first person verbs, and their appearance in deliberative contexts (2014: 10; see also Chapter 2) adds further weight to this argument from a syntactic perspective; she, however, does not consider variations over time.

⁸⁵ Adams 2003a: 344.

⁸⁶ Griffin 1995.

However, not to surrender myself wholly to bitterness of spirit, I have chosen some themes as it were, which are both political and topical, with the object of distracting my mind from its griefs and to keep it busy on the question at issue.

An extended passage of Greek, made up of a series of rhetorical questions, follows. McConnell points out that, although Cicero sets out the questions that he asks himself clearly, the content of his deliberations in Latin and Greek is not included in the letter, and argues that this is because the series of letters from the Civil War are intended as an apologia for a ‘wider audience’: Cicero wants to be seen to be weighing things up rationally and correctly, but prefers to keep the precise contents of these reflections private.⁸⁷ He sums up the deliberation in Greek by saying:

in his ego me consultationibus exercens et disserens in utramque partem tum Graece tum Latine et abduco parumper animum a molestiis et τῶν προῦργων τι delibero. (Att. IX.6A.3)

Practising myself upon these questions and setting out the arguments on either side, now in Greek now in Latin, I take my mind for a while off my troubles and at the same time ponder matters of relevance.

After the rash of code-switching between January and May 49, there is an absence of code-switching throughout 48–47. This reflects the fact that, in contrast to his intense deliberations at the Civil War’s outbreak, Cicero had, for various reasons, few similarly acute decisions to make during the course of the war.⁸⁸ Having finally made his decision and journeyed to Pompey’s camp, Cicero had little space for manoeuvre. He did not have a military post at the camp; he writes to Atticus that he has ‘avoided any responsibility, the more so as nothing could be done in a manner appropriate to me and my past career’; *ipse fugi adhuc omne munus, eo magis quod ita nihil poterat agi ut mihi et meis rebus aptum esset (Att. XI.4)*. Indeed, there is no evidence that his opinion on the situation was even sought.⁸⁹ His decision to leave Pompey’s camp and return to

⁸⁷ McConnell 2014: 75.

⁸⁸ For useful analytical narratives of the Civil War, using the evidence of the letters, see Lintott 2008 and Rawson 1983.

⁸⁹ Brunt 1986: 22.

Italy in October 48 had none of the urgency or rationalism of his calculations in early 49: he admitted to Atticus that he was driven *impetu magis quodam animi uti quam cogitatione* 'more by impulse than by reflection' (*Att.* IX.5.1).⁹⁰ In Brundisium, from where all his letters to Atticus during the rest of 48 and 47 were sent, Cicero found himself very much on the peripheries of the war. Particularly in the aftermath of Pompey's death in September 48, Caesar's military successes, not Cicero's rhetoric, were shaping the parameters of possible action, and Cicero had to wait. Again, in August 47, he laments:

quod me mones ut ea quae <agam> ad tempus accommodem, facerem, si res pateretur et si ullo modo fieri posset. sed in tantis nostris peccatis tantisque nostrorum iniuriis nihil est quod aut facere dignum nobis aut simulare possim. (*Att.* IX.21.3)

You advise me to suit my behaviour to the time. I should, if the case allowed it and it was by any means practicable. But what with my own errors and the grave injuries done me by my own family, I can neither do nor feign anything worthy of myself.

Back in Rome by 46, having been granted permission to travel there by Caesar,⁹¹ and with Pompey's death behind him, Cicero could perceive himself to have regained some relevance. His letters begin again to be filled with engagement in and consideration of political questions, and code-switching again becomes a more regular feature. The first extant instances of Greek in letters to Atticus since 49, in a letter dated April 46, engage in the same kinds of calculations and reflections on the political situation:

o miros homines! at Balbus aedificat; τί ἄρ' αὐτῷ μέλει; uerum si quaeris, homini non recta sed uoluptaria quaerenti nonne βεβίωται? tu interea dormis. iam explicandum est πρόβλημα, si quid acturus es. (*Att.* XII.2.2)

Extraordinary creatures! Balbus, now, is building – *il s'en fiche*. If one comes down to it, can't he say, as a man seeking pleasure not virtue, *vixi*? Meanwhile you are asleep. The 'problem' has to be sorted out if you are going to do anything.

⁹⁰ Rawson 1983: 203.

⁹¹ Rawson 1983: 208.

Unsurprisingly, Cicero's code-switching was not required to serve the purpose of reflection and deliberation during 58–57: he did not regard his exile as a crisis that could be reasoned through in measured terms and reflected upon, but as an insurmountable problem with no way out. Given the preponderance of literary quotations in the code-switching of January to May 49 noted above, it is striking that Latin literary quotations are also absent from Cicero's exile letters: as in Greek, such quotations could have the function of allowing him to sum up and reflect upon dilemmas, and their absence in the exile letters strengthens the argument that this function was not required during this period.

Considering the exile letters in terms of their function and purpose fits with other recent analyses of their language that contest the traditional view of the letters as unstructured outpourings of grief.⁹² Hutchinson attributes definite purpose to Cicero's letters of 58–57, part of which was the performance and justification of extreme grief in the face of criticism from contemporaries. He stresses Cicero's continued awareness of audience and his adaptation, rather than abandonment, of rhetorical style.⁹³ The dropping of Greek should be regarded within this framework: as ever, it was calibrated to fit in with Cicero's communicative aims.

Similar explanations may be ascribed to the patterns of code-switching in the period after Tullia's death in February 45, a period that is, in emotional terms, a low for Cicero as deep as that of his exile.⁹⁴ A reconstruction of the frequency of code-switching around this date is slightly complicated by the fact that there are no extant letters to Atticus between 29 November 46 and 7 March 45, but Adams sees it as significant that there is a complete absence of code-switching in the letters between 7 and 16 March, especially given the high frequencies

⁹² For a useful summary of the criticism and interpretation of Cicero's exile letters in this way from antiquity onwards, see Hutchinson 1998: 25 n. 1.

⁹³ Hutchinson 1998: 25–48, and especially the conclusion at 47–8.

⁹⁴ On Cicero's reaction to his daughter's death, see, amongst others, Baltussen 2009 and Wilcox 2005.

of code-switching in 46.⁹⁵ Adams' argument that the gradual increase in the numbers of code-switches between March and June reflects Cicero's gradual recovery from grief is attractive.⁹⁶ There is, however, again perhaps more to the code-switching than this. On closer inspection, it is possible to see that, again, the renewed code-switching in the letter of 16 March provides Cicero with a language in which to frame an acute dilemma, albeit of a different sort from the political dilemmas that threatened him during the Civil War. Three of the five code-switches within the letter of 16 March concern discussion of Tullia's shrine, a matter obviously of great concern:

insula Arpinas habere potest germanam ἀποθέωσιν, sed uereor ne minorem τιμὴν habere uideatur ἐκτοπιῶσιν. (Att. XII.12)

The Isle of Arpinum allows of a real deification, but I am afraid that its out of the way situation might seem to detract from the dignity of the tribute.

This discussion does more than mark a recovery from grief: the building of the shrine furnishes Cicero with a project to distract himself from grief in a manner parallel to the way that deliberations on the Civil War had enabled him to keep himself from despair. The Greek words ἀποθέωσιν and τιμὴν are used to reflect upon and articulate his desires for the project of the shrine: both Greek terms are value laden and enable Cicero to communicate these desires precisely. From this evidence, we see that Cicero's code-switching was not only a 'light-hearted game' that was interrupted by psychological ups-and-downs, but a calculated strategy of communication to himself as well as to others.

uos Graeci ... appellatis

One aspect of Cicero's code-switching that is difficult to quantify is the extent to which he draws attention to it, through a

⁹⁵ Adams 2003a: 344. Further evidence for a reduction in code-switching after Tullia's death is provided by the fact that Cicero's letters to friends in the period up to 1 February 45 contain relatively high numbers of code-switches, many of them in letters to Cassius (on which see pp. 134–5 and Adams 2003a: 302, 317–18).

⁹⁶ Adams 2003a: 344.

range of means, including using examples that may be marked (i.e. unexpected and/or inappropriate).⁹⁷ As has been outlined above (pp. 119–20) the markedness of his Greek is a complex issue, on which there has been significant debate: Adams and Swain take nearly opposite views in their assessment.

Flagging code-switching via metalinguistic commentary is one way to draw attention to Greek, for example, when Cicero flags his description of *contentiones* (contests) with the phrase *quem ἄγῶνα uos appellatis*; ‘which **you** [i.e. Greeks] call ἄγῶνα’ (my emphasis) (*Att.* 1.16.8). The switch was not unexpected in the context of the relationship between Atticus and Cicero and the term ἄγῶνα was not inappropriate – the vocabulary of Greek athletic contests forms a subcategory of the switches we assign to the function of GCS. The flagging of switches was not, however, the norm in communication between the pair and so flagging this switch makes it marked. Through the flagging, Cicero is able to highlight Atticus’ Greekness and gently rib him for it.⁹⁸ In general, their Greek can be seen as a normal, unmarked discourse mode, but occasionally, as in this flagged example, Cicero adds a reminder that Atticus’ Greekness goes above and beyond that of the rest of the cultured Roman elite.

The addition of flags was just one possible way of indicating markedness in Cicero’s code-switches. There are many more examples where the salience of the Greek is less overtly signalled. The function of a switch offers some, albeit limited, clues to its markedness. Referential switches, for instance, which serve little purpose other than moving the narrative forward, are relatively unlikely to be marked as long as they are used within a context that tends to permit code-switching. Code-switches within the category of ‘Naming’ are also not likely in our material to be marked

⁹⁷ Of course, marked examples may be expected and appropriate from the author’s point of view and designed to trigger a response from the recipient precisely derived from the markedness. For markedness and code-switching, see Myers-Scotton 2006: 158–64.

⁹⁸ Adams 2003a: 318. See also, for example, the Greek pun on Atticus’ name at *Att.* 1.13.5, when he describes his own speeches as Ἀττικώτερον.

because they are seeking to evoke a Greek person or place which is commonly evoked in this way.⁹⁹ The markedness of code-switching could, however, vary significantly within a single category, as an examination of some examples from the category 'GCS' demonstrates.

A number of switches within the category of GCS are applied metaphorically, and their function therefore goes beyond their expected role in evoking one Greek cultural sphere. A good example of this is the medical terminology that Cicero uses to describe Appius' governorship:

cum ἐξ ἀφαιρέσεως *prouinciam curarit, sanguinem miserit, quicquid potuit detraxerit, mihi tradiderit enectam*, προσανατρεφομένην *eam a me non libenter uidi*<ι>. (*Att.* VI.1.2)

Having cared for Cilicia by diminishing her, drawing her blood and removing anything he could, he handed her over to me in a state of exhaustion, and was not happy to see her nourished again by me. (trans. author)

Although it is the place of these words within the Greek cultural sphere of medicine that primarily explains the use of Greek here, the function of these code-switches goes beyond just this: Cicero uses medical terminology to emphasize Appius' cruelty towards his province, and in this context these switches are marked.

Greek words used within an expected Greek context were in general less marked: for example, in a discussion about a decision of the Athenian Areopagus in *Ad Atticum* v.11.6, Cicero uses a Greek term for a decree (ὑπομνηματισμόν). In other contexts, Greek was more unexpected. The use of the Greek language of tyranny to describe Caesar and Pompey (see below, p. 168), and, at *Ad Atticum* i.14.5, the description of the Roman Senate as an ‘Areopagus’ to emphasize its strength in standing up to Clodius (*senatus* Ἀρείος πάγος, *nihil constantius, nihil seuerius, nihil fortius*; ‘the Senate is quite an Areopagus, thoroughly resolute, strict and courageous’) are two good examples of this. In both these instances, it is precisely the

⁹⁹ On this type of ‘evocative’ switching, see Adams 2003a: 300, 303–4, 341–2.

unfamiliarity and non-Romanness that Cicero requires of the Greek in order to achieve its effect.

Cicero's plays on the non-Romanness of his Greek could be subtle. One of the best examples is his description of the *urbanitas* of Atticus' friend and business partner Curius via the Greek adjective αὐτόχθων 'native' (*Att.* VII.2.3). Cicero intends to signify the genuine Roman nature of Curius' wit and manners, although selecting a Greek adjective to do so adds a degree of irony to his description. This irony depends upon the play and contestation between Greek and Roman wit – evidence for which can be found within other Ciceronian letters, both to Curius and others. In February 44, Cicero remarked to Curius: *uides enim exaruisse iam ueterem urbanitatem, ut Pomponius noster suo iure possit dicere: nisi nos pauci retineamus gloriam antiquam Atticam* 'You see how the sources of ancient wit have dried up. Our friend Pomponius [Atticus] can truly say "save that we few keep the ancient Attic glory living still"' (*Fam.* VII.31.2). Ancient Attic wit is here required to sustain the wit of the present day and may therefore be seen as an essential part of contemporary Roman *urbanitas*. Conversely, in a letter to Papirius Paetus, Cicero sets Attic and Roman wit in direct contrast and attempts to defend the (explicitly superior) Roman wit from corruption by foreign elements:

accedunt non Attici sed salsiores quam illi Atticorum Romani ueteres atque urbani sales. ego autem (existimes licet quidlibet) mirifice capior facetiis, maxime nostratibus, praesertim cum eas uideam primum oblitis Latio, tum cum in urbem nostram est infusa peregrinitas, nunc uero etiam bractis et Transalpinis nationibus, ut nullum ueteris leporis uestigium appareat ... moriar si praeter te quemquam reliquum habeo in quo possim imaginem antiquae et uernaculae festiuitatis agnoscere. (*Fam.* IX.15.2)

And then there is the salt of your wit – not Attic, but genuine old Roman, saltier than the Athenian variety. For my part, make what you will of it, I am marvellously fond of pleasantries, our native brand most of all, especially in view of its present decline; for adulterated as it had already become by Latium after the influx of the foreign element into our city, it is now with the accession of the trousered tribes from over the Alps so overwhelmed (?) that no trace of the old gay charm is any more to be found ... Confound me if I have anyone but you in whom I can recognize the image of the good old home-bred humour!

Cicero's patriotic attitude towards pure Roman wit should not perhaps be taken too seriously here. In indicating a *possible* attitude towards the subject, however, it indicates the range and complexity of the relationship between Greek and Roman wit. In this context Cicero's use of a Greek adjective to describe Curius' *urbanitas* stands out and gains irony.¹⁰⁰

A similarly subtle irony in the use of Greek emerges at the end of Cicero's letter to Atticus of 15 or 16 November 55:

illud etiam <atque etiam> te rogo, τὴν παροῦσαν κατάστασιν τυωδῶς, ne istuc hospes ueniam. (Att. IV.13.2)

May I ask you yet again to give me the present situation *dans les grandes lignes*, so that I shall not come back to Rome like a foreigner?

Cicero puts the substance of his request after *rogo* into Greek, switching away from Latin to describe precisely the point on which he fears appearing as a *hospes* at Rome. Cicero thus ironically draws attention to his potential status as an outsider via the use of Greek.

The complexity of the markedness of Cicero's Greek matters because of what it indicates about the wider place and function of Greek in the letters. In particular, it has a bearing on the extent to which Greek was used because it was Greek and the extent to which it was used as part of Latin discourse and strategies. Osborne posed this question in a slightly different form when he asked whether 'all whom we are inclined to reckon multilingual [are] actually not simultaneous users of two (or more) languages but users of a single language – albeit one made up of elements acquired from different sources?'¹⁰¹ There are different possible answers to this question in the case of Cicero. It is often said that the Greek in Cicero's letters is used to fill a gap in Latin or to be, in Adams' terms, 'stylistically evocative [of Greekness]'.¹⁰² In contrast, Swain argues that Greek was required not for its own sake but to add to the richness of Latin rhetorical strategies.¹⁰³ The use of Greek

¹⁰⁰For a broader discussion of Cicero and Roman identity, see Dench 2013.

¹⁰¹ Osborne 2012: 318–19.

¹⁰² Adams 2003a: 341.

¹⁰³ Swain 2002.

critical rhetorical terms within metalinguistic code-switching comes closest to this function. Take for example Cicero's choice to deploy a Greek word in his claim to have described his governorship *non ὑπερβολικῶς sed uerissime* (*Att.* v.21.7). The Greek adverb is sought out not primarily for its Greek associations, but because it enables Cicero to give a precise and nuanced commentary on his own description.

Across the letters, Greek fulfilled the functions attributed to it by both Adams and Swain and worked both within and beyond Latin. This was precisely what made code-switching an effective rhetorical tool for Cicero: it both fitted within the expected norms of Roman culture and communication and, sometimes simultaneously, stood out from them. In doing so, it played into the relationship between Greek and Roman culture and identity more widely. Marked and unmarked, both other to and part of Latin, it reflected the ambiguity of Roman attitudes towards Greek culture as a whole.

παράγραμμα *bellum*¹⁰⁴

Cicero's wordplay was one of the most obvious ways in which he played with, and between, Latin and Greek. Although wordplays account for less than 2 per cent of switches across the letters as a whole, they give useful insights into his language use and attitudes, and those of his correspondents. One of their most striking features is the level of bilingual cognition that they require of the reader. Cicero demonstrates familiarity with a range of different registers and styles of Greek, from Homeric quotations to the Koine, and moreover proves himself adept at clever coinages.¹⁰⁵ The unpicking of his puns and the completion of unfinished literary quotations often demands significant work and knowledge of Greek from the reader.¹⁰⁶ The

¹⁰⁴ *Fam.* vii.32.2.

¹⁰⁵ On Cicero's familiarity with Greek, see *Plu. Cic.* 5.2; Horsfall 1979: 84; Baldwin 1992: 2; O'Sullivan 2017: Chapter 2.

¹⁰⁶ Swain's focus on the 'producer' of the code-switch neglects this aspect of the code-switching; Swain 2002: 141. For a more cautious assessment of the knowledge of Greek amongst Cicero's peers, see Holford-Strevens 1993; Horsfall 1979.

pun at *Ad Atticum* 1.19.2–3, employed in a description of the ambassadors sent to Gaul in 60 to try to prevent more Gallic communities joining the rebelling Helvetii is indicative of this:

legati sunt Q. Metellus Creticus et L. Flaccus et, τὸ ἐπὶ τῇ φακῇ μύρον, Lentulus, Clodiani filius.

The ambassadors are Q. Metellus Creticus, L. Flaccus, and (‘perfume on lentils’) Lentulus son of Clodianus.

Cicero’s basic point is that Lentulus does not fit well with the other ambassadors, and this semantic meaning could be understood with knowledge of the Greek proverb alone (for the same Greek proverb in a conversation involving Fronto, see [Chapter 4](#)).¹⁰⁷ In order to appreciate the wordplay fully, and to understand the particular appropriateness of this Greek expression here, the reader is required to make a rapid connection between the Greek ἡ φακῇ (a ‘dish of lentils’) and the Latin *lens* and hence with Lentulus’ name. As both Shackleton Bailey and van den Hout demonstrate, however, Cicero has perhaps been carried away by his own cleverness here.¹⁰⁸ Although both editors argue that a pun was certainly intended, they point out that, properly understood, the μύρον refers to Lentulus and τῇ φακῇ to the other ambassadors. The pun on Lentulus’ name is still resonant, if less perfect than Cicero perhaps intended.

A similar slight misapplication of a pun occurs at *Ad Atticum* XIV.19.5, when Cicero makes a pun about Dolabella’s ‘coup’ in

¹⁰⁷ It is, however, worth noting the difficulties and disagreements that editors have had over the precise interpretation of this proverb. Van den Hout 1999: 594, in commenting on 262.15 (a passage from Aulus Gellius that cites a conversation involving Fronto) explains that it means ‘to mix things which do not go together, like sweet oil and a dish of lentils; μύρον is an unguent’. The implication is that Lentulus does not fit well with Metellus and Flaccus. Van den Hout notes that several editors of Cicero have misunderstood this meaning: he rejects the interpretations of Haines, Tyrrell and Purser, and Rolfe who understand the proverb to mean that something good (μύρον) has been wasted on something worthless (ἡ φακῇ). Shackleton Bailey 1965: 335–6 assumes the point to be that ‘something of value [is] wasted on something worthless and incongruous’ although, like van den Hout, also considers the possibility that ‘the point lies simply in the incongruity’, referencing the story in Plu. *Caes.* 17 of a rustic who dressed asparagus with μύρον instead of olive oil.

¹⁰⁸ Van den Hout 1999: 594; Shackleton Bailey 1965–70: vol. 1: 335.

light of Atticus' comment to him that *me facere magnam* πράξιν *Dolabellae*; 'You say I am making a great matter out of Dolabella's *coup*'. Cicero responds: *tibi uero adsentior maiorem* πράξιν *eius fore si mihi quod debuit dissoluerit* 'I certainly agree with you that it will be a greater *coup* if he pays me what he should have paid'. Shackleton Bailey, together with Tyrrell and Purser, considers that there is 'surely' a pun here (on the double meaning of πράξιν as 'action' and 'exaction [of debt]'), although argues that it does not work perfectly as Dolabella *owes* the debt.¹⁰⁹

The use of partial literary quotations requires a similar level of knowledge and engagement from the reader (Chapter 2).¹¹⁰ In a letter to Varro of May 46, Cicero comments: *uolebam prope alicubi esse te, si quid bonae salutis*; σύν τε δύ'ερχομένω; 'I wanted to have you nearby in case some chance of good turned up. "Two heads" you know' (*Fam.* ix.7.1).¹¹¹ The Greek is the first four words of *Iliad* 10.224: it runs into line 10.225 and is in full σύν τε δύ'ερχομένω καί τε πρό ὃ τοῦ ἐνόησεν / ὅππῃ κέρδος ἔη 'when two go together, one is quicker than the other to see where advantage lies'.¹¹² Knowledge of this entire quotation, and ideally recall of its original context, is required to understand fully Cicero's expression of need for Varro's support and the depth of his compliment. The two lines are spoken by Diomedes as he prepares to choose Odysseus as a companion to go with him into the Trojan camp; they stress the need for wise and strong support at a critical moment.¹¹³ Cicero's use of the quotation can be read as a double compliment to Varro, indicating both Varro's indispensability to Cicero and Cicero's trust in his knowledge of Greek literature.¹¹⁴ The need for Varro and Cicero to work together as the Greek quotation suggests was especially acute given the timing of the letter.

¹⁰⁹ Shackleton Bailey 1967: 236.

¹¹⁰ On partial literary quotations as the mark of an in-group with a shared culture, see Adams 2003a: 312, also, above, p. 99.

¹¹¹ The same partial quotation appears at *Att.* ix.6.6.

¹¹² Trans. Hammond 1987.

¹¹³ Augustus uses a Greek quotation from the same episode of the *Iliad* to pay a compliment to Tiberius (Suet. *Tib.* 21.6). For a discussion of this passage, see Chapter 5, pp. 261–2.

¹¹⁴ On Cicero's flattery of Varro via Greek in other letters, see Adams 2003a: 316–17.

Written in May 46, soon after news of Caesar's victory over the republican forces at Thapsus had reached Rome, this letter debates, as do *Ad Familiares* IX.2 and IX.5, how Cicero and Varro, both supporters of Pompey, should conduct themselves in their potentially precarious position. In particular, Cicero was keen to discuss with Varro when, and whether, he should leave Rome for Varro's villa in Cumae given Caesar's likely imminent return to the city.

Somewhat ironically, the point at which Cicero most conspicuously does *not* use Greek is final proof of the complexity of linguistic exchange that Cicero demands of his readers within his bilingual wordplays.¹¹⁵ In a letter to Papirius Paetus, he relates a witty remark in Latin that Aristippus, a fifth- to fourth-century Socratic philosopher from Cyrene, made about his mistress Lais, but adds the comment: *Graece hoc melius; tu, si uoles, interpretabere* 'It's better in Greek: translate it if you like' (*Fam.* IX.26.2). Adams attributes Cicero's avoidance of the Greek quotation here to his desire to preserve Paetus' strict Roman wit.¹¹⁶ It is not, however, an avoidance of Greek per se. In relating Aristippus' comment in Latin, but following it up with his own aside that it is 'better in Greek', Cicero invites precisely the level of engagement with the two languages required of full-blown switches into Greek. As we have seen above, humour, and the distinctions between Roman and Greek versions of it, was a broader topic of play and debate within Cicero's and Paetus' letters. Adams is right that the management of Greek code-switching formed part of the construction of Paetus' position within this debate about the relationship between Greek and Roman, but this construction required the deployment of, and allusions to, Greek, as well as the avoidance of it. Cicero happily uses Greek elsewhere to Paetus: examples include the citation of a Greek proverb at IX.22.4, a reference to himself as one of the ὀψιμαθεῖς at IX.20.2, and, at IX.26.1, a reference to dinner as the only philosophical

¹¹⁵ On humour and wordplay in Cicero's code-switching, see Swain 2002: 152–6.

¹¹⁶ Adams 2003a: 315.

problem that Paetus is concerned with (ζήτημα). Their letters therefore demonstrate the requirement for rapid bilingual cognition that runs through Cicero's communication both with and without the presence of Greek.

Both Adams and Swain comment on the high level of cultural 'solidarity', shared concerns and obligations expressed in Cicero's letters,¹¹⁷ and it is in unpacking the thought process that lies behind code-switches (and, crucially, is required of *both* writer and reader) that the extent and effect of this 'solidarity' is demonstrated. This is revealing of the types of relationship Cicero attempts to invite in the letters. A shared literary culture formed an important aspect of these relationships. It was a basis for flattery, as in the example to Varro quoted earlier, but also a potential opportunity to criticize indirectly (see discussion below of the letters to Appius and [Chapter 4](#)). As this and the debates on humour between Cicero and Paetus testify, the knowledge of Latin and Greek required was both linguistic and cultural. This indicates the broader sociolinguistic context in which Cicero operated: Latin and Greek worked together and it was expected that they, and their broader cultural frameworks, could be quickly and easily interchanged.

The linguistic legwork required of the readers, and its relationship to the nature of Cicero's epistolary space and relationships, should also encourage us to reflect on the idea of 'coding', 'confidentiality' and 'privacy' in the letters. Scholarship commonly asserts that confidentiality was an aim of Cicero's letters, and Cicero regularly comments on the dangers of entrusting letters to slaves.¹¹⁸ The division between public and private spheres within the letters was, however, more fluid than this. Despite Cicero's comments on the taboo against the reading of private letters (conveniently made to deflate accusations Antony has made against him on the basis of evidence taken from a 'private' letter),¹¹⁹ letters were often

¹¹⁷ Adams 2003a: 322 and Swain 2002: 150, 152, 164. On 'solidarity' in Cicero's code-switching more generally, see Mäkilähde and Rissanen 2016.

¹¹⁸ See, for example, *Fam.* XIII.68.

¹¹⁹ *CIC. Phil.* II.8.

A Charade of Familiarity

forwarded to third parties, as the inclusion of letters to Caesar, Antony and others within Cicero's correspondence with Atticus proves. Henderson's analysis of the ways in which Caesar was written in as the true recipient of Cicero's letters to Quintus demonstrates how these public and private boundaries were played upon in the correspondence.¹²⁰ As we saw in [Chapter 2](#), some Ciceronian passages are deliberately flagged as 'code' but these passages are perhaps no more obscure than the passages involving puns or partial literary quotations discussed above, and it seems difficult to attach an aim of true confidentiality to them. Indeed O'Sullivan demonstrates that although the coded passages of extended Greek would have been partially obscure to a Koine reader because they deploy old-fashioned, 'classical' Greek,¹²¹ this does not in fact differentiate them starkly from the rest of Cicero's Greek, which is also frequently classical. The 'coding' in the Ciceronian letters seems designed to exclude 'the masses' but not necessarily other elites. Very sensitive matters were not entrusted to letters at all,¹²² not even in coded Greek, but rather information could be relayed orally by *certi homines* at the point of delivery. Instead, it is tempting to regard the flagging of coded switches as a means to contrive a feeling of private communication and exclusive engagement between writer and addressee.

A Charade of Familiarity

The creation of a confidential and exclusive epistolary space may be seen as part of a broader construction of familiarity, at times revealed to be a charade, that operated within the letters and that code-switching helped to sustain. Cicero used Greek to construct and invite close relationships within the letters, even when the historical reality of those relationships was more difficult or distant. Because the precise historical context

¹²⁰ Henderson 2007.

¹²¹ O'Sullivan 2017: 97–9.

¹²² Nicholson 1994; see, for example, *Att.* IV.1.8: *praeterea sunt quaedam domestica quae litteris non committo* 'Moreover, there are certain private matters which I don't trust to a letter'.

has often been neglected in existing sociolinguistic studies, this aspect of Cicero's code-switching, and the specific aims he sought to achieve by it, have rarely been considered. In turn, a study of Cicero's code-switching in context sheds light on historical debates and assumptions about his relationships. Using the general patterns of his code-switching discussed above as a framework, the final section of this chapter will therefore consider the use of Greek within Cicero's epistolary relationships with Appius Pulcher, Atticus, Caesar and Pompey.

Appian Ways

The letters to Appius Pulcher exemplify the way in which the charade of familiarity worked; reading them in light of Cicero's complaints to Atticus about Appius demonstrates the pretence involved in epistolary constructions of *amicitia* and the role Greek played in upholding it.¹²³ Cicero himself was well aware of this pretence: he commented proudly to Atticus on his βαθύτητα in *Appio* 'self-restraint towards Appius' (*Att.* VI.1.2), the Greek here being used to demonstrate the self-conscious reflection and effort required in managing his relationship with Appius.

As the elder brother of Clodius and Cicero's allegedly rapacious predecessor as governor of Cilicia, Appius was strongly disliked by Cicero. In letters to Atticus from 51 to 50, Cicero complains about Appius' attitude to the province. As we have already seen (p. 145), he employed vivid medical terminology to describe the differences between his own and Appius' treatments of Cilicia in *Att.* VI.1.2. The medical terminology comes at the beginning of a long paragraph in which Cicero complains in no uncertain terms about Appius' financial abuse of the province, about the 'extortions ... outrages ... indignities' (*rapinis ... libidinibus ... contumeliis*) of Appius and his

¹²³ McConnell 2014: 109–11 also comments on the 'façade' of *amicitia* and the role that Greek code-switching plays in it in the context of Cicero's letters to Atticus about Caesar. However, because he only considers the role of Greek in this specific context, we suggest that he implies too strong a distinction between the 'façade' of the Latin language of *amicitia* and the 'reality' of the Greek language of tyranny.

staff, and his ‘many unjust ordinances and proceedings’ (*multa inique constituta et acta*).

In writing directly to Appius, however, Cicero did much to assure him of their friendship in the face of doubts. Greek was used to punctuate these professions of *amicitia*. In a letter of late 53 or early 52, Cicero ended a section in which he apologized for the infrequency of their meetings and promised to render all possible services to Appius in future with a neat Greek quip involving Appius’ name: if he acquired a bust of Athena from Appius, *non solum Πολιάδα sed etiam Ἀππιάδα nominabo* ‘I shall style her not only Polias but Appias’ (*Fam.* III.1.1). Like the wordplay discussed above, this remark adds a playful aspect to the letter, and pays a light-hearted compliment to Appius, in making his name into the epithet of a god. In a letter of February 50 (*Fam.* III.9.2), written just after the tetchy letter discussed below (*Fam.* III.7), Cicero skilfully uses Greek as part of his argument that he is looking after Appius’ interests. It is apparent that Appius has recently received news that he is likely to receive a triumph for his service in the province. Cicero denies that he is pleased because this makes him more likely to receive one himself, arguing that it is rather because Appius’ interests and standing are important to him: *neque uero ob eam causam, quo ipse facilius consequeretur (nam id quidem Ἐπικούρειον est), sed mehercule quod tua dignitas atque amplitudo mihi est ipsa cara per se*. Here the Greek is used to draw attention to the unlikeliness of this self-interested behaviour on Cicero’s part: he follows not Greek Epicurean philosophy, but Roman values of *dignitas*.

Greek could also be used to make the pretence of *amicitia* that it propped up obvious, as demonstrated within Cicero’s somewhat prickly letter to Appius on 11 February 50, nine days before Cicero made the damning comments about Appius’ treatment of Cilicia in the letter to Atticus discussed above.¹²⁴ The letter

¹²⁴ Hall 2009: 150–1 also discusses this passage, its (im)politeness, and its ‘uncharacteristically ill-tempered’ nature. He, however, makes no specific reference to the Greek. Rollinger 2015: 140–1 also uses this letter and the Homeric quotation within it as an example of the way that Greek was used to negotiate difficult relationships, also commenting on the significance of the quotation’s original context in undermining Cicero’s outwardly friendly language.

addresses a number of points of tension between the two men: a dispute about a building project in Appia that Appius is keen will go ahead but Cicero wants halted until he has dealt with concerns about the taxation needed to pay for it; Appius' annoyance that Cicero had not gone to meet him when he had the opportunity; and a dispute about hierarchy and the definition of nobility, in which Cicero claims that nobility is derived from merit in contrast to Appius' privileging of name and descent. Cicero ends the discussion of this last point of debate with a suggestion that Appius read the philosopher Athenodorus' work on the definition of nobility: *ut quid sit εὐγένεια intellegas, Athenodorus, Sandonis filius, quid de his rebus dicat attenderis*. By using Greek here, Cicero is able to frame the dispute as a philosophical rather than a political one, whilst also drawing attention to their different perspectives on the topic.

Cicero ends the letter with a discussion of the *amicitia* between the two men that hints at its fragility:

sed ut ad rem redeam, me tibi non amicum modo uerum etiam amicissimum existimes uelim. profecto omnibus meis officiis efficiam ut ita esse uere possis iudicare. tu autem si id agis ut minus mea causa, dum ego absim, debere uidearis quam ego tua laborarim, libero te ista cura:

παρ' ἑμοίγε καὶ ἄλλοι

οἱ κέ με τιμήσουσι, μάλιστα δέ μητίετα Ζεὺς.

si autem natura es φιλάτιος, illud non perficies, quo minus tua causa uelim; hoc adsequere ut, quam in partem tu accipias, minus laborem.

haec ad te scripsi liberius fretus conscientia officii mei beneuolentiaeque, quam a me certo iudicio suscepam, quoad tu uoles, conservabo. (Fam. III.7.6)

But to come back to the point. I want you to believe that I am not only your friend, but your very good friend. Naturally I shall do all I can in a practical way to enable you to decide that this is really so. As for yourself, if your object is not to appear bound to work for my interests while I am away as heartily as I worked for yours, why, I hereby relieve you of that preoccupation –

Others stand by me

to do me grace, and before all wise Zeus.

But if you are a fault-finder by nature, you will not make me any the less your well-wisher; all you will achieve is to leave me less concerned about your reactions. I have written rather frankly, in the consciousness of my own friendly conduct and goodwill, an attitude which, as I have adopted it of deliberate choice, I shall maintain so long as *you* wish.

Cicero begins the paragraph with a reassurance to Appius that he is *non amicum modo uerum etiam amicissimum*. We will see a similar use of superlative language to flatter Atticus in the dedication of the *De Amicitia*, discussed below (p. 160). Cicero's own commitment to the maintenance of *amicitia* returns at the end of the passage when he reminds Appius of his *conscientia officii ... beneuolentiaeque*. As Williams points out, *beneuolentia* was an important currency within transactions of *amicitia*.¹²⁵ In the middle of the passage, however, Cicero drops hints about the threats to their friendship, and the fact that Appius is not adequately reciprocating his friendliness. Outwardly, the quotation from *Iliad* 1.174–5 appears friendly and considerate: it fits into standard language patterns between members of the republican elite. It is placed after the phrase *libero te ista cura* 'I relieve you of those cares [towards me]' and could be taken at face value as reinforcing this point and removing any weight of responsibility from Appius. The content and especially the context of the quotation, however, carry a different force. The quotation makes the point that Cicero does not need Appius because he has others who can help him out. Shackleton Bailey identifies Pompey with μητίετα Ζεύς standing at Cicero's side.¹²⁶ There is a veiled threat here: given Pompey's standing in 50 (Cicero has said earlier in the letter that he rates him above everyone else who has ever lived: *Cn. Pompeium, quem omnibus qui umquam fuerunt*), Appius would not want to end up on the wrong side of a Cicero–Pompey alliance. An understanding of the original context of the quotation further undermines Cicero's friendly tone. The quotation comes from Agamemnon's speech following his row with Achilles in which he commands him to leave and expresses his contempt for him. In the lines immediately following those quoted by Cicero, Agamemnon says that Achilles is ἔχθιστος δέ μοι ἔσσι διοτρεφέων βασιλῆων· αἰεὶ γάρ τοι ἔρις τε φίλη πόλεμοί τε μάχαι τε (*Il.* 1.177–8) 'most hateful to me of the divinely nurtured kings; for wars and battles are always dear to you'. This example demonstrates what can be

¹²⁵ Williams 2012: 22–3 and 219 on Cicero's letters specifically.

¹²⁶ Shackleton Bailey 1977: vol. 1: 373.

said and unsaid in Greek quotations, and how they can be used to give a subtle commentary on the state of relations between correspondents. In quoting from this speech, Cicero implies his frustrations with Appius, whilst pulling back from insulting him directly, as Agamemnon does Achilles. Of course, one could argue that the criticism is tempered by the fact that Appius is implicitly compared to Achilles (whom Agamemnon does turn out to need), but the force of these lines is nonetheless strong. In the next line of the letter, Greek again both reveals Cicero's feelings and maintains a charade of polite epistolary language. Cicero suggests that Appius is a 'fault-finder' (*si autem natura es φιλαίτιος*), but laughs it off, claiming that it makes no difference to his feelings towards him. The Greek simultaneously both distances and focuses attention onto Cicero's critical description.

Cicero draws attention to his less-than-friendly language at the end of the letter:

haec ad te scripsi liberius fretus conscientia officii mei beneuolentiaeque, quam a me certo iudicio susceptam, quoad tu uoles, conseruabo.

I have written rather frankly, in the consciousness of my own friendly conduct and good will, an attitude which, as I have adopted it of deliberate choice, I shall maintain so long as *you* wish.

In spite of the description *liberius*, the letter, and its use of Greek in particular, retains a degree of subtlety in the way it both deploys the language patterns and qualities of polite friendship and undermines them. Appius obviously got the message that he needed to play his part in this game of *amicitia* more properly: in Cicero's next surviving letter to Appius on 21 February, he exclaims

tandem legi litteras dignas Ap. Claudio, plenas humanitatis, officii, diligentiae (*Fam.* III.9.1)

At long last, I have read a letter worthy of Appius Claudius, full of courtesy, friendliness and consideration!

mi Attice

The epistolary exchanges between Cicero and Atticus are a good test case for the notions of intimacy and familiarity,

and their relationship to code-switching, that have come into question in this chapter. The intimacy between the two is, not without reason, usually taken for granted, and the frequency and function of code-switching in Cicero's letters to Atticus is often explained in light of this.¹²⁷ Whilst not seeking to deny the intimacy of their relationship altogether, it is important to remember that, as noted above, intimacy was just one part of the performance of *amicitia* that ran through the letters, and there is more going on in the letters between Cicero and Atticus than its expression. Their relationship was subject to the same obligations and negotiations as other relationships in Cicero's epistolary corpus.¹²⁸ Rather than employing code-switching solely to demonstrate how their relationship stands out, we can therefore instead use it to consider how their interactions fit into these wider networks and epistolary practices and expectations. This analysis is assisted by our systematic categorization of code-switches which enables us to pinpoint similarities across letters to different addressees more firmly. Situating Cicero's code-switching to Atticus in this wider framework allows us to break down the relationship between code-switching and intimacy, and enables an understanding of code-switching as a rhetorical strategy within the politics of epistolary exchanges. In doing so, our analysis overlaps with recent approaches to other aspects of Cicero's epistolary language, notably that of Williams: 'I read not so much "love and friendship in Cicero's letters" as Cicero's performance of interpersonal relationships in his private correspondence in and through language.'¹²⁹ An understanding of the code-switching between Cicero and Atticus in these terms also sheds further light on the workings of their relationship and reveals how it fitted into wider networks and pressures of late republican friendship.

¹²⁷ See Konstan 1997 for a discussion of the relationship between Cicero and Atticus as a 'special case', and Adams 2003a and Swain 2002 for a reading of their code-switching in light of this assessment.

¹²⁸ For an example, see *Att.* 1.1, discussed Chapter 1, or *Att.* 1.17, where Cicero 'leans on the kind of polite routine that he employs with less intimate political associates' (Hall 2009: 65).

¹²⁹ Williams 2012: 219.

We need to take a step back and consider the other historical evidence for the nature of this relationship, and the debates around it, in both the letters and beyond. On the one hand, it is easy to see why Cicero and Atticus are regarded as a special case: their voluminous correspondence is full of candid admissions and expressions of affection. The choice of Atticus as the dedicatee of Cicero's treatise on friendship seals his position as Cicero's closest friend: Cicero claims to be writing *ad amicum amicissimus* 'as a most affectionate friend to a friend', and comments that in reading his depiction of the ideal friendship between Scipio and Laelius, Atticus will recognize himself (*legens te ipse cognosces*).¹³⁰ On the other hand, it is worth stressing that the superlatives that Cicero uses in the *De Amicitia* are not reserved for Atticus within the letters.¹³¹ His description of himself as *amicissimus* mirrors the language used to Appius quoted above (pp. 156–7) and Cicero's characterization of a friend as an *alter ego* in the *De Amicitia* is applied to Caesar as well as to Atticus in the letters.¹³²

This shared language of friendship should also prompt us to remember a crucial point of distortion. The nature of the surviving evidence spotlights the relationship between Cicero and Atticus and conceals the broader networks of friendship and communication within which Atticus operated. Once this broader network is glimpsed in sources such as Nepos' biography of Atticus, the uniqueness of Cicero's and Atticus' relationship is diminished. One of the most salient pieces of evidence on this point is Nepos' account of the dangerous period following Cicero's proscription and death. Nepos makes no mention of any concern that Atticus may have had for Cicero's fate, but concludes his description with the comment:

sic Atticus in summo timore non solum sibi, sed etiam ei, quem carissimum habebat praesidio fuit. (NEP. Att. 10.5)

¹³⁰ CIC. *Amic.* 5. On Atticus as the dedicatee of *De Amicitia*, see Citroni-Marchetti 2009.

¹³¹ On the formulaic nature of superlatives and expressions of friendship in the correspondence, see Williams 2012: 227–8. See Dickey 2002: 134–6 on the meaninglessness of the superlative form of address *carissimus*.

¹³² *Att.* III.15.4; *Fam.* VII.5.1

Thus, at the point of greatest fear, Atticus provided protection not only for himself, but for him whom he held most dear.

carissimum refers to Q. Gellius Canus, characterized by Nepos as *aequalem simillimumque* ‘of the same age and very similar [to Atticus]’ and with whom Atticus apparently lived in harmony from boyhood. In the letters between Cicero and Atticus, however, Canus is a marginal figure: he appears briefly in *Att.* XIII.31.4 when Cicero discusses a piece of financial business with which Canus is assisting Atticus. It is also likely that his daughter is the Cana floated as a possible suitor for Quintus junior, the son of Cicero’s brother Quintus and Atticus’ sister Pomponia.¹³³

The fact that the *praesidio* that Atticus secured for himself and Canus was obtained from Antony in repayment for Atticus’ help is further evidence of Atticus’ web of connections and favours that extended beyond and indeed bypassed Cicero:

Atticus cum Ciceronis intima familiaritate uteretur, amicissimus esset Bruto, non modo nihil iis indulsit ad Antonium uiolandum, sed e contrario familiares eius ex urbe profugientes, quantum potuit, texit, quibus rebus indiguerunt, adiunxit. (NEP. *Att.* 9.3)

Although Atticus enjoyed great intimacy with Cicero and was very friendly with Brutus, not only did he give them no help in injuring Antony, but on the contrary he protected Antony’s friends and family when they were fleeing the city and gave them the help they needed.

This passage acknowledges the intimacy and affection (*intima familiaritate*) in Cicero’s and Atticus’ friendship, but also demonstrates that it was not a limiting factor on Atticus’ behaviour and formed only a part of his calculations and negotiations of *amicitia*. This assessment is worth bearing in mind when considering the letters.

Welch has studied one dimension of Atticus’ extensive networks in detail, discussing the murky financial transactions with which he was involved and stressing the ways in which these complicated his relationship with Cicero.¹³⁴ Hints of

¹³³ Shackleton Bailey 1965–70: vol. v: 348.

¹³⁴ Welch 1996.

these transactions, and of Cicero's frustrations with them, are apparent within the letters, in particular within discussion of the Salaminian affair, a shadowy case involving the repayment of a loan that Brutus made to Salamis in Cyprus, and in which Cicero became involved at Atticus' request.¹³⁵ Welch provides an account of Atticus' involvement behind the scenes and argues that Cicero's criticisms of the affair were directed at Atticus as well as Brutus.¹³⁶

The language of Cicero's letters to Atticus, including the code-switching, needs to be read against this backdrop. Further analysis of certain moments during their epistolary exchanges demonstrates that they often involved the same polite exchange of benefits and requests, expressed via the same rhetorical tropes and patterns, as any other Roman friendship. We have already demonstrated some of the overlaps between patterns of code-switching to Atticus and code-switching to others, and now look at some specific examples in more detail.

During Cicero's campaign for the consulship, he repeatedly requested Atticus' presence in Rome so that he might win over the *optimates*.¹³⁷ During and after the Civil War, Cicero relied on Atticus to obtain information from both Pompey and Caesar. Greek was often deployed within these requests. In 59, Cicero asked Atticus to determine Pompey's attitude towards him: *quaeres scilicet κατὰ τὸ κηδεμονικὸν et ad me ab eo quasi ὑποθήκας adferes quem ad modum me geram* 'you will of course make your inquiries as a relative and bring me a prescription as it were from him on how to conduct myself' (*Att.* II.17.3). The *scilicet* takes the fact that Atticus will follow through with the request for granted, but the Greek phrases work to soften it, placing it within a cultured and familiar discourse mode. As Adams argues, the use of Greek within requests could have the effect of tempering them.¹³⁸ Similarly, in May 45, Cicero asked Atticus to gauge the Caesarians' attitude towards the

¹³⁵ On this affair, see *Att.* V.21, VI.1, VI.2.

¹³⁶ Welch 1996: 463–6.

¹³⁷ *Att.* I.2.

¹³⁸ Adams 2003a: 332.

publication of his 'Cato', demanding τοῦτο δὲ μηλώσῃ 'You will probe the matter' (*Att.* XII.51.2). These kinds of requests went both ways and were a crucial part of the obligations and performance of *amicitia*. Careful negotiation was required to get around them without causing offence, as letter I.1, which opened this book, demonstrates. It contains an apology from Cicero for his refusal to speak in court against one of his own clients, Caninius Satyrus, who is accused of having defrauded Atticus' uncle Caecilius. As we have seen, some complex argumentation and persuasion is at work in the letter: Cicero is keen to convince Atticus that his refusal is made on the moral grounds of his friendship with both Satyrus and his confidant L. Domitius, in the face of Atticus' belief that it has to do with Cicero's self-interested concern not to lose support in the run-up to the consular elections. Cicero reinforces his argument with a partial quotation of Homer, which comes from a critical moment in the *Iliad* (*Il.* 22. 159–61), when Hector is fighting with Achilles for his life. When this quotation and its context are recalled in full, it underlines the seriousness of the situation in which Cicero finds himself. The way in which it is quoted, requiring Atticus to fill in the gaps, flatters Atticus' knowledge of literature in the same way as the partial quotations used in the letter to Varro above (pp. 150–1). This and the other examples discussed above demonstrate that Cicero's and Atticus' relationship was subject to the same anxieties and negotiations as others. Code-switching served as a strategy within these negotiations far more than it reflected an easy intimacy between the two men. The fact that all three instances of code-switching considered here are intra-sentential and that the last is a partial quotation is reflective of the ways in which 'intimate' patterns could be used to increase the sense of politeness and familiarity in difficult circumstances rather than necessarily being generated by the quality of those relations.

As discussion of the letters to Appius showed, this strategy could be more or less transparent, and the same effect is visible in the letters to Atticus. In letter XVI.7, in which Cicero reproached Atticus for advising him to leave Italy to join

Pompey in 49, code-switching is used to convey thinly veiled disappointment. The Greek in Cicero's comment that *etiam si non prudenter, tamen ἀνεμέσητα sunt* 'even if it was not prudent, there is no blame' (*Att.* XVI.7.2) seems to suggest that Atticus should not blame himself, but, read against Cicero's frustrations with Atticus in the rest of the letter, it strikes a hollow note and ironically attaches blame to him even more. Later in the same paragraph, Cicero responds to Atticus' request to compose an ἀπολογισμὸν demonstrating that it was his duty to leave Italy in the Civil War and to dedicate it to Atticus. Cicero says that *ego vero istum ἀπολογισμὸν ἰυντάξομαι sed ad eorum aliquem quibus invitis et dissuadentibus profectus sum* 'I shall indeed compose that apology but address it to somebody who was against my leaving and dissuaded me'. In this he draws attention to his refusal to include Atticus in his ἀπολογισμὸν, since he holds him partly responsible. Via the Greek, Cicero is able to turn Atticus' request on its head: he picks up the use of Greek in Atticus' quoted original request (*velim σκόλιον aliquod elimes ad me, oportuisse te istuc facere* 'I should like you to polish up a little tract to show that such was your duty, and address it to me'), but uses it to exclude Atticus.

Of course, none of this is to deny altogether the intimacy within their relationship or some of the uniqueness of their epistolary language. Atticus was important to Cicero, and this was to an extent reflected in the nature of their epistolary language.¹³⁹ The letters exchanged in the build-up to the Civil War, in which Cicero candidly discussed the difficulties and dilemmas that he faced, are evidence of his dependence on Atticus, and of his construction of him as an ideal friend and advisor, a construction familiar from *De Amicitia*.¹⁴⁰ It is, however, worth stressing that there are other reasons than their closeness for the unique range and frequency of their code-switching

¹³⁹ Williams 2012: 231–2 discusses some of the ways in which Cicero's language to Atticus is different from that of other friends, for example in its expression of brotherly love.

¹⁴⁰ On the construction of Atticus/the narcissistic nature of Cicero's view of Atticus as a friend, see Citroni-Marchetti 2009.

highlighted in our empirical analysis above (pp. 128–9, 134). Atticus’ strong Greek identity was also a factor shaping the contours of their code-switching, as we saw in our discussion of flagging and markedness.¹⁴¹ Cicero’s adaptation of his code-switching to highlight the Greek or Roman identities of his recipients was not restricted to letters to Atticus: we saw it also in the letters to Paetus.

This analysis therefore shows code-switching to be part of the construction of *amicitia* in the letters, rather than as a yardstick of intimacy. It also provides a way into contextualizing the relationship between Cicero and Atticus: we should see this relationship as a part of, rather than apart from, the networks and negotiations of friendships in late republican epistolography. *De Amicitia*’s ideal that friendship should be between a pair of men rather than between many did not translate into practice: both men were part of a wider network of *amici* whose interests had to be balanced. Partly because of this, maintenance of the friendship between Cicero and Atticus, like any other, required rhetorical work. Greek, rather than being proof of the intimacy of their relationship, can be a way into appreciating the ways in which it was articulated and negotiated against wider social and political pressures.

Caesar vs. Pompey: πρόβλημα *sane* πολιτικόν

Understanding the nature of Cicero’s relationship to Caesar is problematic, just as it was, apparently, for Cicero himself. The contradictions of their relationship became particularly acute in Cicero’s reactions to Caesar’s victory in the Civil War. Cicero complains bitterly of Caesar’s actions: his caustic description of Caninius’s day-long consulship and his damning comparison of Caesar to Hannibal stand out.¹⁴² There is, however, evidence that Cicero had some faith in Caesar’s political aims: in a letter to Servius Sulpicius Rufus (crucially a non-Caesarian) Cicero

¹⁴¹ On Atticus’ Greek identity, see, for example, Adams 2003a: 318–19; Swain 2002: 148. NEP. *Att.* 4 claims that Atticus ‘spoke Greek so well that he seemed to be a native of Athens’ (*sic enim Graece loquebatur, ut Athenis natus uideretur*).

¹⁴² *Fam.* VII.30; *Att.* VII.11.1.

admitted that he had seen a revival of the *res publica* in Caesar's pardon of one of Pompey's leading supporters M. Claudius Marcellus.¹⁴³ Cicero's planned letter of advice to Caesar and his admonitions in the *Pro Marcello* (his public speech in reaction to Marcellus' restitution), moreover, demonstrated that he could at least conceive of a role for himself within the Caesarian regime. His openness towards Caesar also pre-dated Caesar's victory: despite the constraints of public opinion,¹⁴⁴ he was genuinely torn over the course he should take.¹⁴⁵ Cicero's intellectual interests were closer to Caesar's than to Pompey's; indeed, Caesar's dedication of his *De Analogia* to Cicero highlights their shared engagement with linguistic questions.¹⁴⁶

Cicero's use of Greek in relation to Caesar highlights some of these tensions and paradoxes within their relationship. It is used to convey bitter descriptions of Caesar, but also works as a strategy of communication that enables Cicero to bridge some of the gaps between them. The frequency with which Caesar is referenced, directly or indirectly, within Cicero's code-switching is notable. Within the letters to Atticus, there are around eighty allusions to Caesar in Greek, and four in letters to Quintus, representing roughly 10 per cent of the code-switches in each collection. Outside the letters to Caesar himself, however, there is no Greek describing Caesar in the letters *Ad Familiares*. Part of this may be down to an accident of survival: almost half (thirty-nine) of the code-switches describing Caesar in the letters to Atticus occur between January and May 49, a period when there are few extant letters to other friends. It seems, however, as though this was one area where Cicero was more candid with Atticus than with others: it is in letters to Atticus that he shows his workings on the problem and admits the parameters of his dilemma. It also appears as a problem that they share: the word νέκυια to describe

¹⁴³ *Fam.* IV.4.3.

¹⁴⁴ On the constraints placed on Cicero by his public *officium* during the Civil War, see Brunt 1986.

¹⁴⁵ *Att.* VIII.3 contains long and detailed deliberations in which Cicero sets out the benefits and concerns of the different courses of action.

¹⁴⁶ Fantham 2009: 149; Hendrickson 1906. The dedication is quoted at *Brutus* 253. On Caesar and language, see Fantham 2009: 148–51 and, on Caesar's code-switching in particular, Uden 2011.

Caesar's followers was originally used by Atticus and picked up by Cicero (*Att.* IX.18.2).¹⁴⁷ Cicero's involvement of Atticus in his decisions about Caesar in 50–49 is neatly illustrated by the answer Cicero repeatedly imagines he would give if called upon in the Senate to defend his attitude towards Caesar's bid for the consulship *in absentia*, which was the crux of the events eventually leading to war: 'dic, M. Tulli'. *quid dicam?* 'exspecta, amabo te, dum Atticum conueniam'? "Speak, M. Tullius!" What shall I say? "Be so kind as to wait until I see Atticus?" (*Att.* VII.1.4).¹⁴⁸ There were political as well as personal reasons why Atticus was caught up in Cicero's acute dilemma over Caesar. As Rawson points out, it was Atticus who had advised Cicero to maintain friendly relations with both Caesar and Pompey, which was a strategy that was difficult to maintain once civil war broke out.¹⁴⁹ Moreover, Atticus had strong links to the Caesarians that Cicero exploited.¹⁵⁰ It was therefore essential that the full consequences and dangers of Cicero's position were made clear to Atticus. Greek was a useful means by which to do so.

Two aspects of the Greek that Cicero uses to describe and discuss Caesar are particularly interesting. First, Cicero casts Caesar as a philosophical problem to be reasoned through, as reflected in the Greek *si hoc mihi ζητημα persolueris* (*Att.* VII.3.11) and his denial of Stoic τὸ καλὸν to Caesar.¹⁵¹ This is striking in the light of the fact that philosophical vocabulary is, on the whole, rarer in the letters *Ad Atticum* than in the letters

¹⁴⁷ The word is also used at *Att.* IX.10.7 and IX.11.2. A νέκυια was a magical rite involving the calling up and questioning of ghosts and was apparently also the name given to the eleventh book of the *Odyssey* (when Odysseus goes down into the Underworld). Shackleton Bailey 1965–70: vol. IV: 380.

¹⁴⁸ This imagined answer is repeated at VII.3.5 and VII.7.7, with slightly different formulations each time.

¹⁴⁹ Rawson 1983: 186. As we have seen in the discussion above, Cicero held Atticus responsible for his choices during the Civil War, and showed his frustration with him.

¹⁵⁰ As we saw above pp. 162–3, in *Att.* XII.51, for example, Cicero asks Atticus to use his connections to the Caesarians to gauge the likely reception of Cicero's proposed letter to Caesar.

¹⁵¹ *Att.* VII.11.1. On the philosophical dimension of Cicero's treatment of Caesar in the letters, see McConnell 2014, especially 195–219 and 62–114 and, on the use of Greek specifically, 109–12. He argues (p. 111) that Cicero's use of Greek to describe Caesar to Atticus forms part of 'the Platonic narrative that runs through the letters to Atticus at this period'.

Ad Familiares. Second, there are many phrases and descriptions that employ the language of Greek politics: particularly prominent are those words associated with unsuitable forms of rule such as tyranny and demagogy.¹⁵² Thus, Cicero compares Caesar to the tyrant Phaleris (invoking his name in Greek),¹⁵³ and deplores the necessity of employing *κολακεία* ‘flattery’ in his proposed letter to Caesar.¹⁵⁴ These terms are indicative of the difficulties Cicero faces in attempting to describe Caesar: the usual language of Roman politics is insufficient.¹⁵⁵

McConnell comments that Cicero’s use of Greek in other letters to Atticus is not ‘particularly helpful’ in understanding the significance of Greek in his letters about Caesar: ‘[i]n indeed, Cicero’s Greek in the letters is multifaceted to such a degree that it must be judged on a case-by-case basis’.¹⁵⁶ We, however, argue that a wider comparative view gained from our systematic study of Greek across the letters is essential. A consideration of Cicero’s code-switching in relation to Pompey provides one point of comparison that sheds further light on his attitude towards Caesar and its expression through code-switching.¹⁵⁷ Cicero also resorts to the vocabulary of Greek politics and philosophy to describe his frustrations with Pompey. Although he reserved the language of tyranny for Caesar during the Civil War, he had previously flirted with applying it to Pompey: in a letter of late April or early May 59, he opened a letter to Atticus with a description of how *Sampsiceramus* (the name of an Eastern potentate and his preferred nickname for Pompey) *ὁμολογουμένως τυραννίδα συσκευάζεται* ‘confessedly worked for absolute power’ (*Att.* II.17.1). During the Civil War itself, Cicero denied philosophical good (*τὸ καλόν*) to Pompey, just as he did to Caesar, describing how Pompey *πολλὰ χαίρειν τῷ καλῷ* ‘bade farewell to good’ (*Att.* VIII.8.2).¹⁵⁸ Pompey’s abandonment of Stoic morals is here portrayed as being all the more

¹⁵² McConnell 2014 and Gildenhard 2006.

¹⁵³ *Att.* VII.12.2.

¹⁵⁴ *Att.* XIII.27.

¹⁵⁵ McConnell 2014: 109.

¹⁵⁶ McConnell 2014: 109–10.

¹⁵⁷ For a chronological account of Cicero’s relationship with Pompey, see Rawson 1978.

¹⁵⁸ Dated 23 February 49.

disappointing because τὸ καλόν seemed briefly to shine (*fulsisse*) before him before he squandered his chance. Cicero also uses Greek political language to describe Pompey's incompetence: *ego hominem ἀπολιτικώτατον omnium iam ante cognoram, nunc uero etiam ἀστρατηγητότατον* 'I already knew [Pompey] to be a hopeless failure as a statesman, and I now find him an equally bad general' (*Att.* VIII.16.1). Similar disgust is shown through the comparison Cicero draws between Pompey's conduct and desperate desire for flight during the Civil War and the improprieties of love affairs, hardly the language in which one would expect a great general to be described:

numquam mihi postea placuit nec unquam aliud in alio peccare destitit. nihil interim ad me scribere, nihil nisi fugam cogitare. quid quaeris? sicut ἐν τοῖς ἐρωτικοῖς alienat <quod> immunde, insulse, indecore fit, sic me illius fugae neglegentiaeque deformitas auertit ab amore. (*Att.* IX.10.2)

Thereafter he was never to my liking. He went on blundering now here now there. Meanwhile not a line to me, not a thought except for flight. In short, just as *en choses d'amour*, anything uncleanly, uncouthly, unsuitably done alienates, so the ugliness of his flight and discourtesy turned me from my affection.

Two, contrasting, points may be taken from the way in which Cicero treats Pompey in his Greek. First, Cicero's use of Greek to describe Pompey demonstrates that Caesar was not unique in stretching Roman political norms: Greek was also required to frame some of Pompey's behaviours. Gildenhard is right to see the figure of the Greek tyrant as being good to think with.¹⁵⁹ As the Civil War changed the parameters of normal politics, the Greek language provided Cicero with a means to articulate them. At the same time, Greek demonstrates that Caesar was unique in the success and influence that he enjoyed in the new political climate. Where Pompey is described as ἀπολιτικώτατον 'unstatesmanlike',¹⁶⁰ Caesar is described in precisely opposite terms when Cicero frames him as πρόβλημα *sane* πολιτικόν 'a wholly political problem' (*Att.* VII.9.1). Where Pompey had tried and failed to work for tyranny ten years before, Caesar is the one who actually obtained it. Cicero may not have liked the

¹⁵⁹ Gildenhard 2006: 206.

¹⁶⁰ *Att.* VIII.16.1.

new political system, but he was forced to recognize Caesar's dominance, and Pompey's failures, within it: Greek was one of the ways in which he frames this.

This must have some implications for our understanding of the relationship between Cicero and Caesar. It demonstrates that Cicero did not view Caesar's behaviour as entirely unprecedented, but had previously seen Pompey in similar terms. The difference was that Caesar succeeded. Putting Caesar in this context goes some way to explaining why Cicero was able to bring himself to cooperate and communicate with Caesar: Caesar's behaviour was not quite so unthinkable as might be assumed.

Greek (and specifically literary Greek) addressed *to* Caesar offered a means for Cicero and Caesar to communicate in a way that minimized rather than exacerbated the distance between them.¹⁶¹ There is much discussion, conducted via Greek, in Cicero's letters to Quintus from 54 about Caesar's reaction to Cicero's literary style: Cicero quotes Caesar's description of his verses as ῥαθυμότερα 'rather languid' (*Q. fr.* II.16.5). It could be imagined that literary topics were a way to avoid more politically sensitive topics. This at least is the impression given by Cicero's comment to Atticus in a letter describing his conversation over dinner with Caesar in December 45: σπουδαῖον οὐδὲν *in sermone* φιλόλογα *multa* 'in our conversation was nothing serious, but a good deal on literary matters' (*Att.* XIII.52.2).

The hollowness of this separation between politics and literature is, however, revealed when it is considered against Cicero's letter to Caesar of May/June 45 in which he reinforces his points with a series of six Greek literary quotations (*Fam.* XIII.15).¹⁶² This is a self-consciously unusual letter of recommendation: Cicero states explicitly at its end that *genere nouo sum litterarum ad te usus* 'I have written you a letter of a new type'.¹⁶³ This unusualness is reflected in the letter's

¹⁶¹ On the epistolary relationship between Cicero and Caesar in general, see White 2003.

¹⁶² See Swain 2002: 160 and now Gildenhard 2018: 217–20 on this letter.

¹⁶³ Cf. a standard letter of recommendation to Caesar, *Fam.* XIII.16. On the language of letters of recommendation in general, see Cotton 1985.

code-switching patterns: in contrast to the usual patterns across the correspondence as a whole, in which inter-sentential switches account for just 9 per cent of the code-switching, five of the six code-switches in this letter are inter-sentential. All six switches are literary quotations: together, they therefore account for a large proportion of the sixteen literary quotations across the letters *Ad Familiares*. Although unusual within the corpus as a whole, the code-switching within this letter can be argued to fit within normal patterns of communication between Cicero and Caesar. As discussed above (p. 135), Henderson argues that the letters Cicero sent to his brother when Quintus was stationed in Gaul were really directed to Caesar.¹⁶⁴ In these letters too, there is a high proportion of literary quotations and inter-sentential switching. It has already been shown in the analysis of letters to Appius that literary quotations could be used to express potentially sensitive opinions in a subtle way: they can be argued to be one of the most important tools in creating the ambiguity of meaning that McConnell sees as so important within the letters. The type of code-switching matters too: as inter-sentential switches, they are not so integrated into the main text, and attract the reader's attention. *Ad Familiares* XIII.15 then shows how the type of code-switching could be regulated to provide a means for Cicero to communicate with Caesar in ways beyond the normal limits of a letter of recommendation. According to Shackleton Bailey, the letter served not only the declared purpose of recommending Precilius, but also functioned as a defence of Cicero's conduct against Quintus' accusations that he was conspiring against Caesar.¹⁶⁵ On this interpretation, Greek literature served not as a way to avoid politics, but as a common language through which sensitive political attitudes could be communicated and political distances bridged.

¹⁶⁴ Henderson 2007.

¹⁶⁵ Shackleton Bailey 1977: vol. II: 458.

Cicero's description of his dinner conversation with Caesar should be reconsidered in this light. Given the function that Greek literature served in Cicero's letter to Caesar, it is perhaps unlikely that the two topics were as separate as Cicero claimed in his letter to Atticus just a month later in July 45. Instead, it is possible that Greek literature was deployed as a means by which politics could simultaneously be distanced and discussed, as in *Ad Familiares* XIII.15 and the letters to Quintus. Through Greek literature, Cicero could strike a pose of detachment from politics and, under cover of this detachment, gain himself space to communicate with Caesar on sensitive political matters. This same pose of detachment is at work in Cicero's commentary on the dinner: though he outwardly separates politics and literature, by describing them both in Greek he aims to highlight the overlap between the two topics to Atticus, who would have been well aware of the uses to which Greek literature could be put. We are reminded again of Clark's analysis of the ways in which Romans drew from and combined different categories in their communications. In both his exchanges with Caesar and his commentary on these exchanges to Atticus, Cicero manages this via Greek.

Conclusion: The Republic through Letters

This chapter has shown the value of Cicero's Greek code-switching as a lens onto the broader themes and patterns of the correspondence and its historical context. It has demonstrated that sociolinguistic modes of analysis have real relevance to historical questions. Both systematic analysis and close reading in context are required to see this. Systematic analysis reveals broad trends and patterns: the predominance of intra-sentential switching, the range of different functions, the changing frequencies across time, the variations between the different letter collections. The use of 'intimate' and 'familiar' patterns of code-switching across the letters to a range of different addressees challenges the idea of code-switching as

a measure of intimacy: instead, we should see it as part of the strategies of negotiation and display of complex relationships. It is moreover not only a reflection of Cicero's psychological state, but a tool to solve difficult problems such as the best course of action to take in the Civil War. From its ambiguous position, both part of the Roman cultural and political world and outside it, Greek could function as a marker of the boundaries of acceptable action in this turbulent period.

Close reading of Cicero's code-switching can be used to unpack the dynamics of particular relationships and to challenge assumptions about them. Although we cannot ignore some of the distinctive elements of the letters between Cicero and Atticus, a comparative analysis of the code-switching within them shows that their epistolary relationship should not be set apart: it was subject to the same expectations and negotiations as other relationships and Greek was used to manage these. Through code-switching, we see the extent of Cicero's agonizing over Caesar: Greek both frames the political gulf between them and works as a way to bridge it. Analysis of Cicero's code-switching in correspondence with and about Caesar also illustrates the wide range of categories on which Cicero drew to communicate, and the impossibility of separating literature, politics and philosophy – although ironically it is only in beginning by categorizing them separately that it is possible to see how they worked in conjunction. Through code-switching, we also gain further insights into the nature of republican letter writing. We see the careful negotiations and calculations that underpinned it and the potential of the language of letters as a sensitive barometer of contemporary politics and society for both their ancient and modern audiences. Interpretation of the code-switching requires cultural as well as linguistic work from the reader and is therefore revealing of the rich intellectual life of this period. Indirect communication via code-switching, such as we see in the letters between Cicero and Quintus (where the evidence of code-switching supports Henderson's suggestion that these are at least partly communications between Cicero

and Caesar), shows the interconnectedness of the late republican elite and the importance of letters in maintaining this: a Republic through letters indeed. Greek extends the range and effectiveness of the languages available in these letters and makes the correspondence multilingual in the widest sense.

CHAPTER 4

IMPERIAL RELATIONS: GREEK AND THE *LINGUA ROMANA* OF FRONTO AND FRIENDS

A reader of the correspondence of Fronto, a character known essentially only through his letters,¹ may at times feel voyeuristic, as if trespassing into a personal realm not designed for publication. Neither the Plinian nor the Ciceronian collection encourages such sentiments, the former almost entirely polished for publication and the latter never really written without awareness of the watchful eyes of a broader late republican audience beyond the named addressees. Fronto's letters offer a private view into the elite Roman world of the mid second century and an insight into a special relationship: that of tutor and emperor.

This chapter opens with a detailed consideration of the nature of Fronto's correspondence and the complexity of diagnosing code-switching within a linguistic and textual minefield. The letters illustrate problems already raised in [Chapters 1, 2 and 3](#), but the issues with this text are more acute than for any of the other authors treated in the volume. In assessing the linguistic diagnosis of code-switching, we reflect on the importance of not being unduly influenced by potentially distracting features such as choice of script and, in understanding code-switching, contemplate idiolects, authority over language and contextual analysis. Next a sociolinguistic analysis of the epistolary activities of Fronto and friends is presented, which considers the selection of language in the bilingual second-century elite environment and the frequency, type and functions of code-switching. Following the functional analysis, we assess the

¹ We also have three sections of Fronto's speeches in the courts and the Senate: VdH 10.14–13.9; 189.20–197.4; 256–8.

central relationship in the letters, that is, between Fronto and Marcus Aurelius (hereafter Marcus), and probe the linguistic negotiations between members of elite society. As with the Plinian and Suetonian correspondence, once again we have privileged access to emperors, their relationships and language. In the case of Fronto's correspondence, the rapport between a high-level subordinate and Marcus is further complicated by two special aspects: the role of Fronto as *magister* to his *Caesar* and the potentially dangerous intimate relationship. We explore the cautious 'outpouring' of emotion and the ways in which amatory concepts could be concealed, or empowered, by Greek. This chapter presents an investigation of the use of language in the evolving relationship of the two main protagonists. Finally we draw the analysis together with a discussion of the complex nexus of language–culture–identity as seen through the letters and the commentaries of Marcus and Fronto and relate their correspondence to its broader socio-linguistic context. We see, as in [Chapter 3](#), that the epistolary relationships tell us about attitudes towards languages and the epistolary language in turn sheds light on the relationships.

Introducing Fronto and His Correspondence

Marcus Cornelius Fronto, born *c.* AD 95 in Cirta, Roman Numidia (modern Constantine, Algeria), the descendant of apparently wealthy Roman colonists, became a leading advocate at Rome and a teacher of literary criticism and rhetoric.² By the 120s, he was a senator and in 142 was unexpectedly made *consul suffectus*, perhaps partly as compensation for his failure in a lawsuit against the very well connected Herodes Atticus.³ At the instigation of Antoninus Pius, he became Marcus' Latin teacher in 139, when the future emperor was in his late teens, and continued until Marcus became co-regent and turned his attention to other studies in *c.*145. About this

² Dio 69.18.3.

³ AD 142 as demonstrated in Eck 1998, rather than 143 as in van den Hout 1999: vii and Champlin 1974.

time, the letters appear to have reduced in frequency, but, even when Marcus became emperor in 161, they still corresponded, although Fronto barely veiled his disappointment at being sidelined. Fronto died in *c.* 167, ill and distraught, following the loss of his wife and grandson in quick succession.⁴ He appears to have suffered pain and sadness throughout his life: five of his six children had perished in early childhood.⁵

Fronto is an overlooked author of Roman literature.⁶ Following the discovery of the text in the nineteenth century, scholars rejected the correspondence when the content, style and pederastic context did not live up to Marcus' lofty standing and the resultant reputation has largely kept the social and cultural historians at bay.⁷ Another reason for the lack of interest is that the letters are a bizarre mix of the sublime and the mundane, clearly not to everyone's tastes. At one moment we learn of the finer points of stylistic practice and the next a bout of diarrhoea.⁸ We might also be put off by Fronto's old-fashioned literary preferences and his obsession with flattering the emperors Antoninus Pius, Lucius Verus (hereafter Verus) and Marcus. Van den Hout notes how devastating the judgement of modern literati on this corpus has been and offers an equally damning qualification: 'Fronto was no simpleton, only a third-class writer.'⁹ He refers to Fronto's 'pure, simple style, with a great deal of colloquialisms (but not as many as Marcus' letters) and many a post-classical turn of phrase'.¹⁰ But we should not be misled: the letters are mostly not outpourings in the vernacular; they are full of archaisms,

⁴ See Champlin 1974: 137–9 for a discussion of the possible date of his death. For the death of his wife and grandson in the space of a few months, see VdH 113.3–4; 240.16–18.

⁵ See Claassen 2007. See the letters *De nepote amisso* at VdH 235.1–240.22.

⁶ Fronto apparently enjoyed a good reputation in antiquity; Eumenius, for example, notes that Fronto was *Romanae eloquentiae non secundum sed alterum decus* 'the other, not the second, glory of Roman eloquence' (*Panegy. Constant.* 14). Brock 1911 makes a valiant attempt at rehabilitation.

⁷ Laes 2009: 2.

⁸ For hypochondria in the letters, see Freisenbruch 2004: 145–86; 2007; Whitehorne 1977.

⁹ Van den Hout 1999: x.

¹⁰ Van den Hout 1999: x.

quotations, proverbs, puns, alliteration, *figura etymologica*, *homoioteleuta* and other rhetorical features, all carefully chosen to impress and to instruct his correspondents.

The defective nature of the collection and text as transmitted and the issues with the available editions and translations constantly throw obstacles before any analysis, not least a sociolinguistic one. The letters were perhaps not edited until the fourth century and they were probably not prepared for publication by Fronto.¹¹ As scholars seem to enjoy stating, ‘to Fronto belongs the unique distinction of surviving in no fewer than three palimpsests’.¹² The main text itself,¹³ which represents perhaps four-sevenths of the original corpus, was discovered by Angelo Mai in the early nineteenth century, one part in the Ambrosian Library in Milan (Ambros. E.147 sup., new shelf mark S.P. 9/1, 6, 11) and subsequently another in the Vatican Library (Vat.lat.5750). Fronto’s letters seem to have been copied out in the fifth century, with corrections, variant readings and commentary added by an *emendator* in c. AD 500.¹⁴ The codex was subsequently dismembered, mixed with other texts (including parts of Symmachus, Pliny, Juvenal and Persius), and reused, with the pages usually inverted, to record the Acts of the Council of Chalcedon in the seventh century. Mai used chemicals crudely to try to read the earlier writing and the resultant text is extremely difficult to restore, full of gaps and uncertain readings.¹⁵ Van den Hout’s 1988 edition, replacing his own edition of 1954, has now become

¹¹ Freisenbruch 2004: 23–30 has details of the publication debate.

¹² Reynolds 1983: 173.

¹³ The other two, much shorter fragments, are a few words in fourth- to fifth-century rustic capitals from the end of Fronto’s *Gratiarum actio pro Carthaginiensibus* in the palimpsest manuscript Vatican, Pal.lat.24 (ancient codices of mostly classical authors reused for the Old Testament) and fragments of *Epist. ad Verum* 2.1 (overlapping with the Milan text) written in sixth-century uncials on one leaf of Paris lat. 12161 (written over in the late seventh or early eighth century with Jerome and Gennadius); see Reynolds 1983: 173–4.

¹⁴ For a discussion of the role of the *emendator* ‘Caecilius’, see VdH xxxv–xliii; Zetzel 1980. The *emendator* has been known as Caecilius since Mai’s reading of the longest subscription: *Caecilius s<ae>pe <r>ogatus legi emendaui*; VdH now has *haec ibidem collata prerogatus legi emendaui* (52.14), removing his name (Reynolds and Wilson 2013: 40).

¹⁵ See Freisenbruch 2004: 15–60 and VdH viii–lxxx for the transmission and editing.

the standard text (VdH), although Holford-Strevens regrets that this is a diligent report of others' work rather than a full re-edition based on autopsy.¹⁶ The commentary, van den Hout (1999), is copious, although again not without faults,¹⁷ and refers directly to VdH by page and line number, rendering this edition of the text indispensable. The standard translation of the texts into English, Haines' out-dated Loeb edition (1919, 1920), follows a reconstructed chronological ordering rather than the codex order of the letters¹⁸ and proffers a faulty Latin text and imperfect translations.¹⁹

These textual issues, more acute for Fronto's correspondence than any of the other corpora discussed in this volume, remind us of the gap between modern oral evidence, so commonly the basis for modern sociolinguist research, and the written evidence to which classical scholars attempt to apply modern sociolinguistic analysis (see [Chapter 1](#)), and there are further problems with our evidence and its appropriateness for research into code-switching. As we have seen, Roman letters perhaps more than many other literary types can offer evidence approaching oral output, but Roman epistolography is an extremely broad category. Fronto's letters range from intermittent communications over a distance, to quick-fire interactions, with an apparently short delay between dispatch and reception, giving the impression of conversational interaction. Fronto's correspondence with Verus, judging by the few letters

¹⁶ Holford-Strevens 1991. This may be somewhat unfair: the implication of some recent scholarship is that the text is in an even more piteous state than when Mai first treated the codex with chemicals. It is unclear therefore whether autopsy, even if possible, would have helped. The facsimile of the Vatican codex (Ehrle 1906) indicates just how difficult the underlying text is to decipher; it is possible that the latest digital imaging techniques applied to the manuscripts could aid in resolving disputed readings.

¹⁷ See Holford-Strevens 2000; Zetzel 2000.

¹⁸ See Gibson 2012: 64.

¹⁹ The most recent English translation and commentary, Davenport and Manley 2014, tackles only 54 of over 200 letters. Richlin's 2006b translation only presents letters by Marcus and Fronto from 139 to 148. Fleury and Demougin (2003) present a strangely one-sided picture, setting out everything written by Fronto, with discussions of Marcus' letters relegated to footnotes. They use Haines' Loeb text with VdH's divisions and numbering and offer a French translation. All the translations in this chapter are the author's, unless otherwise stated.

available to us, seems to have been particularly disrupted: a letter from Verus from the East during the Parthian War in the 160s makes a meal of apologizing, perhaps because he is encouraging Fronto to write a history of the war,²⁰ for his lack of communication with his old tutor (VdH 107.4–108.5).

mox quod tantis terris disiunctus, qui te in uestigio exorare potuissem, tot interea mensibus, dum meas litteras accipis, dum ego tuas recipio, cura discrucior. (VdH 108.1–3)

Since I am separated by so much land, what I could have asked of you in person, I now have to be tortured for so many intervening months while you receive my letter and I wait for yours.

Another letter from Fronto, sent before Verus leaves for the East in the early 160s, has to make excuses for his absence from Rome and for not picking up his post over several months and not responding to the tears being shed (*lacrimas uestras*, possibly caused by the death of Verus' grandfather) (VdH 115.7–116.19).²¹

Sometimes letters are carefully constructed over a lengthy period on lofty topics, at other times there was pressure to write on demand. In a letter to Marcus, for example, Fronto complains about an impatient courier *sed iam hora decimam tangit et tabellarius tuus mussat. finis igitur sit epistulae* 'But it is now nearly four o'clock and your courier is muttering. My letter has to end!' (VdH 5.15). Fronto describes a scene, however, which indicates that he has also been guilty of keeping others waiting:

Castricius noster libellum tuum mihi heri reddidit de balneo egredienti: peti ut mane ad me ueniret ad rescriptum accipiendum. per noctem ita uexatus sum tussi et uigiliis, ut necessario in quintam horam dormierim. ita Castricius nostrum detinui. (VdH 187.7–10)

²⁰ Lucius Verus' letter explains that he will send copies of despatches sent by his commanders and his own letters so that Fronto can write a history (VdH 108.6–109.4).

²¹ Letters to far-flung provinces could take weeks to arrive, if they managed to survive the trip. It could be months before a writer in Roman Syria, for example, discovered whether his correspondent in Rome had received his news. Scheidel and Meek's ORBIS model calculates that the fastest journey between Rome and Palmyra would have taken c. 28 days in summer (<http://orbis.stanford.edu/> (last accessed 23 April 2018)).

Introducing Fronto and His Correspondence

Our friend Castricius yesterday handed me your letter as I was exiting the baths; I asked him to come to me in the morning to receive the reply. During the night I was bothered by a cough and could not sleep and had to lie in till eleven o'clock. That is why I held up our Castricius.

Epistolary relations were no doubt contextually varied and it is not always possible to reconstruct the mode of composition, time and effort expended or even the order of letters received, which hinders our ability to judge where the letters reside on a scale of orality.

Indeed, it is not always even clear who the authors and recipients are in the Frontonian correspondence: some letters are assigned essentially on the reasoning that they sound similar to other letters whose authors and recipients can be positively identified. Haines comments in a footnote to *Ad Verum (?) Imp. i. 1* (VdH 133–5) that '[t]he heading and title to this letter are lost, and its attribution is not certain. It reads like a letter to Marcus. Naber, following Mai, assigns it to Verus.' Even when we are certain of the author, the question of whether we might be dealing with dictation or autography cannot always be answered.²² Probably the majority of Marcus' vast correspondence would have been dictated (at VdH 63.14–15, Marcus is out of breath, having dictated nearly thirty letters and at VdH 83.3–4 Marcus states that, because of the need for exercise, *haec obambulans dictavi* 'I've dictated this pacing up and down').²³ However, he was praised by Dio for writing personally to his closest associates (71.36.2); the implication at VdH 63.14–15 is that he is *not* dictating a letter to Fronto and he is definitely writing himself at VdH 28.1–4; 63.22–64.9 and probably at VdH 54.17–56.4. Marcus comments that *merito unum hominem cogito, quom stilus in manus uenit* 'I am right to think of one man only [Fronto] when the pen comes to my hand' (VdH 28.17–18) and Fronto is proud at VdH 15.17 that his speech in Marcus' letter (VdH 10.1–13.16) has been copied out in Marcus' own hand. The tutor says how much he

²² Roman letter writers of sufficient means could employ a secretary to take their dictations, see McDonnell 1996.

²³ For imperial correspondence and the question of dictation, see Millar 1977: 213–28.

likes it when Marcus writes personally and explicitly requests that *tua manu scribas* (VdH 38.4).

In fact, although we cannot take this for granted, autograph letters between Marcus and Fronto appear to be the norm and lapses elicit excuses, usually physical incapacity. Fronto three times complains about niggles in his hand, which force him to dictate letters to Marcus, with the third example additionally confirming another instance of Marcus' autography:

manus dexteræ dolor, mediocris quidem, sed qui a rescribenda longiore epistula impeditur; dictavi igitur. (VdH 90.9–10)

A pain in my right hand, which, although slight, has stopped me writing a longer letter; so I have dictated it.

quod librari manu epistula scripta est, a labore graui digitis consului, quæ sunt iam in suspicione. (VdH 146.11–12)

By having this letter written by my scribe I have saved my fingers from a hard task, for they are not currently up to it.

ne mihi suscenseas, quod non mea manu tibi rescripserim, præsertim cum a te tua manu scriptas litteras acceperim. digitis admodum inualidis nunc utor et detractantibus; tum hæc epistula multum uerborum ingerebat, mea autem dextera manus hac tempestate paucarum litterarum. (VdH 225.20–226.3)

Do not think badly of me for not writing to you in my own hand, especially since the letter I received from you was in your own hand. My fingers are now very weak and not working properly, in addition this letter demanded length but my right hand just now can only produce a few words.

At another point Fronto assigns his inability to write to generalized pain:

uexatus sum, Domine, nocte diffuso dolore per umerum et cubitum et genu et talum. denique id ipsum tibi mea manu scribere non potui. (VdH 85.2–3)

I've been troubled through the night, my Lord, with widespread pain through my shoulder, elbow, knee and ankle. As a result I was not able to write this to you in my own hand.

Indeed in a subsequent letter Fronto references this unfortunate situation and notes that he had to proceed *contra morem nostrum* 'contrary to my [or, perhaps, 'our?'] custom'

(VdH 64.20).²⁴ Marcus in turn offers a trembling hand as an excuse for dictation:

mea manu non scripsi, quia uesperī loto tremebat etiam manus. (VdH 235.9)

I have not written this in my own hand, because after my evening bath even my hand was trembling.

and elsewhere uses the fact that he is writing *precaria manu* (VdH 64.1–2) as evidence for his physical condition. Presumably hand-written letters felt more personal and, indeed, for reasons of privacy, Marcus and Fronto may have preferred not to dictate, especially for their more intimate missives. In a letter to Marcus, Fronto explains that he has sent it with ‘our friend Victorinus’, but has folded it, sewn it up and sealed the ends of the thread *ne musculus iste aliquid aliqua rimari possit* ‘so that little mouse cannot poke his nose in anywhere’ (VdH 20.19–21.1). Fronto then recalls that Marcus has frequently said that he is keen to keep his verse compositions private (VdH 21.5–6). Whether a letter has been sketched roughly by the ‘author’ and then written up by a secretary, dictated, or composed and written by the author himself, has obvious implications for our sociolinguistic analysis (see also [Chapter 1](#)).²⁵

Diagnosing Code-Switching: The Linguistic and Textual Minefield

For Fronto’s correspondence, the awkward linguistic decisions on code-switching, which have been discussed in preceding chapters, are rendered even more fragile by the instability of the text. Comments have been made in the online database

²⁴ In a letter to Verus, Fronto expresses his relief that the previous letter was written *tua manu*, and therefore marked a return to health (VdH 109.15–16).

²⁵ Sometimes dictated letters would be checked by the author (Quintilian mentions letters of Augustus which *sua manu scripsit aut emendauit* ‘he wrote or emended in his own hand’ (1.7.22)) and we have direct evidence of letters which have been corrected by the same or different hands and examples of draft and fair copies on the same stylus tablet (e.g. the transactions of C. Novius Eunus; see Adams 1990). Marcus mentions that his *librarius* was not on hand to transcribe his homework at VdH 76.13–14. Fronto tells Volumnius Quadratus that he will correct his speech *librari manu* as his own is painful (VdH 187.14–16).

when readings are in serious doubt, but the text as a whole is a flimsy structure of interpretation and interpolation. Nonetheless, rather than despair and avoid non-technical analysis, we proceed with caution and scepticism, where necessary, concerning our predecessors' creation of the text. As with the other corpora, making a decision between code-switching and loanwords in the text is not easy. In doing so, we might recall the commentary of a contemporary of Fronto, which reminds us of the importance of judging each word in context and paying attention to the attitude and practice of the author. In a passage 'reported' by Gellius, where Fronto and interlocutors are discussing whether the Greek-origin word *nani* 'dwarfs' counts as a Latin word or not, Apollinaris states that

fuisset autem uerbum hoc a te ciuitate donatum aut in Latinam coloniam deductum, si tu eo uti dignatus fores. (Noctes Att. xix.13.3)

This word would at once have been granted citizenship by you or been introduced into a Latin colony if you [Fronto] had deigned to use it.

This develops a link between 'citizenship' and language, and specifically lexical borrowings, which had been mentioned by Seneca in the *Epistles*, and raises the important theme of *auctoritas* in linguistic change and standardization (see [Chapter 5](#) for further discussion).

hoc uerbum[analogia] cum Latini grammatici ciuitate donauerint, ego damnandum non puto, puto in ciuitatem suam redigendum. utar ergo illo non tantum tamquam recepto, sed tamquam usitato. (Ep. 120.4)

Since this word 'analogy' has been given citizenship by Latin grammarians, I do not think that it ought to be condemned, but I do think it should be brought back into its citizenship. I shall, therefore, make use of the word, not merely as accepted, but as established.

In Seneca's remarks, it is the *auctoritas* of the *Latini grammatici* that can bestow 'citizenship' on a word. In a similar vein, in Gellius' conversation, Fronto, as guardian of the purity of the Latin language, has that power.²⁶

²⁶ The notion of non-Latin words being granted citizenship, that most 'Roman' of concepts, also appears in Suetonius, though he deliberately plays with the concept and argues that not even a Caesar has that power: *tu enim, Caesar* [Tiberius],

However we view the veracity of Gellius' passage, which follows a deliberately schematized agonistic debate between the champion of Greek, Favorinus, and the champion of Latin, Fronto, on the subject of colour terms (2.26),²⁷ we can be confident that the ideas expressed about the competence and authority of certain figures in decisions about the nature of foreign loanwords and their integration in *Latinitas* were current. From this we might draw the conclusion that, even if a Greek word is not attested widely in Latin, it may nonetheless count as Latin if a respected literary figure is willing to admit it as such in his idiolect. One person's code-switch is another's borrowing and we must be flexible about the linguistic categorization of lexemes based on contextual awareness.

Two examples will illustrate the difficulties in making decisions between the categorizations of code-switching and lexical borrowing. The first, *antithetis* (VdH 96.22), appears in a late letter from Fronto to Marcus, in the phrase *Sallustium antithetis honeste compositis usum* 'the Sallustian use of properly composed antitheses', which introduces two examples from the *Bellum Catilinae*. The noun *antitheton*, -ῖ n., the Latin from Greek ἀντίθετον, with the latter having been used, for example, by Cicero and flagged as Greek,²⁸ is not particularly well attested; it appears to occur in its Latin form only once before Fronto in Persius (1.86)²⁹ and is only regularly used by Augustine, who states that

antitheta enim quae appellantur in ornamentis elocutionis sunt decentissima, quae Latine ut appellentur opposita uel, quod expressius dicitur, contraposita, non est apud nos huius uocabuli consuetudo, cum tamen eisdem ornamentis locutionis etiam sermo Latinus utatur, immo linguae omnium gentium. (Civ. 11.18)

ciuitatem dare potes hominibus, uerbo non potes 'for you, Caesar, can confer citizenship on men but not on a word' (*Gram. et rhet.* 22). See [Chapter 5](#) for further discussion.

²⁷ See Valette 2014: 102–3 and Swain 2004: 32 for the context. Fronto refers to *Fauorinus noster* at VdH 219.2.

²⁸ *semper haec, quae Graeci ἀντίθετα nominant, cum contrariis opponuntur contraria, numerum oratorum necessitate ipsa faciunt, et eum sine industria* (*De Orat.* 50).

²⁹ It is hard to judge whether *crimina rasis librat in antithetis* (1.85–6) is meant to evoke specifically Greek flourishes or not; considering the context of the surrounding diatribe, it is not impossible.

Antitheses, as they are termed, are very elegant features of style, we call them in Latin *opposita*, or, more precisely *contraposita*. It is not usual for us to use this term although Latin, and in fact all languages, employ the very same features.

It seems therefore that *antitheton* is not a widespread loanword in Latin in the second century, and, since the Latin alternatives *contraposita* and *opposita* exist, we might consider the possibility that this may be a code-switch into Greek presented in the Frontonian text in Latin script. However, the context for the term suggests otherwise. The letter is a serious one in entirely didactic mode and full of citation of Roman authors, featuring a series of extracts from Sallust's *Jugurtha*. Where code-switches into Greek do appear, which we would expect in discussion of rhetoric, they seem to be flagged in self-conscious ways: *figuras etiam, quae Graeci σχήματα uocant* 'also figures of speech which the Greeks call σχήματα' (VdH 96.21)³⁰ and *Tullium uero commotissima et familiari oratoribus figura usum, quam scriptores artium ἐπαναφορὰν uocant* 'but Tullius used a most moving figure of speech and well known to orators, which theorists call ἐπαναφορὰ' (VdH 97.4). In the example with *antithetis*, three factors may have encouraged a Latin form rather than a Greek code-switch: first, the immediate context is Sallust's use of language, and therefore a 'Roman' one; second, the Latin linguistic context requires an ablative and there is no straightforward one-to-one equivalent in Greek (see [Chapter 2](#)); and third, the more elegant of the two Latin equivalents that Augustine cites, *contraposita*, would create a possibly undesirable lack of auditory *variatio* with the following word *compositis*. Fronto consistently impresses on his charge the importance of the appropriate word for the context, and must have been particularly alert to the necessity of following his own advice in this discussion of proper style, so we might not be far astray in this line of thought. This

³⁰ There is another similar example in Haines (1920) *idcirco hoc in **schemate** tu faceres idem quod pictor* (*Ad Antoninum Imp.* ii.6 (p. 160)) with *schemate* in Latin script and in the ablative case, but this is not in VdH, where the editor has not adopted Haines' *schemate* but stuck to a more straightforward reading (see also Naber 1867: 108): *idcirco hoc in scripto iam faceres idem quod pictor Calamis* (97.16–17). *schemate* has not been included in the database.

noun was therefore deemed a loanword in this context and not included in the database of code-switches (see [Chapter 1](#)).

To take another example which falls perhaps just over the other side of the code-switching line, and has been included as a code-switch in the database, we might consider the use of the Greek concept of φιλοστοργία ‘affection for friends and family’, which occurs a few times in the letters and in Marcus’ *Meditations*.³¹ In the mid 160s, a letter of recommendation from Fronto to Verus concerning a certain Gavius Clarus states the following:

simplicitas, castitas, ueritas, fides Romana plane, φιλοστοργία uero nescio an Romana: quippe qui nihil minus in tota mea uita Romae repperi quam hominem sincere φιλόστοργον; ut putem, quia reapse nemo est Romae φιλόστοργος, ne nomen quidem huic uirtuti esse Romanum. (VdH 111.16–20)

Candour, modesty, truthfulness, an obviously Roman loyalty, ‘warmth of affection’ but I am not sure that last one is Roman. Indeed I have come across nothing less often in my whole life than a man who is truly ‘affectionate’; I suspect, because there is actually no one in Rome who is ‘affectionate’ in this sense, that there is not even a Roman word for this quality.

The adjective also appears in an earlier letter of recommendation from Fronto to Lollianus Avitus concerning Licinius Montanus, which dates to the late 150s.

frugi, probum, philostorgum prae ... eu ... sos eum, quoniam eius rei nomen apud Romanos nullum est. (VdH 173.15–16)

Useful, honest, ‘affectionate’... since there is no word for this quality amongst the Romans.

The text is fragmentary but the sense of the second passage seems to mirror the first and something may have caught the eye of a later scribe as the phrase is repeated, lightly adapted, in the margin.³² Again Fronto highlights the fact that the word does not exist amongst the Romans, although, somewhat paradoxically, he employs it in Latin form (see [Chapter 5](#) for a parallel). Fronto’s view seems to be supported by attested Latin: the term

³¹ Marcus addresses Fronto as φιλόστοργε ἄνθρωπε at VdH 234.13 (and not the other way round as per Swain 2004: 27).

³² *frugi, probus, philostorgus cuius rei nomen apud Romanos nullum est* (VdH 173.28).

is used in Greek script by Cicero (φιλοστοργότερον *Att.* 13.9.1; φιλοστόργως 15.17.1; 15.17.2; πάνυ φιλοστόργως 15.27.1) and only seems to appear in Latin form in Fronto. Given Fronto's own statement that this is a non-Roman word, we ought to see this, in both Greek and Latin scripts, as a code-switch. The broader implications of the equation apparently being expressed here between language and the world it describes will be considered at the close of the chapter.

In most cases in Fronto's correspondence, however, where Latinate endings and Latin script have been employed for 'Greek' words the context does not suggest a code-switch; the words may not be widely used borrowings but are integrated into the Latin discourse in these letters, akin perhaps to what Poplack and others have called 'nonce borrowings' (see [Chapter 1](#)).³³ Close reading of the correspondence indicates that, in this corpus at least, the Greek code-switches have, on the whole, been presented in Greek script. However, we need to be cautious: the Greek script might lull us into thinking that we can make easy decisions, but we cannot be sure whether the original authors made this choice, or the first editor(s), the fifth-century copyist, modern editors or a combination.³⁴ Indeed analysis revealed that twenty probable code-switches into Greek had been rendered in Latin script in our editions (*pannychio* (38.17), *epichiremate* (6.3), *erasten* (249.2), *kharites* (27.12), *acentetum* (228.9), *apopsi* (228.19), *daduchis* (132.18), *dictabolaria* (154.1), *dicteria* (154.1), *magiras* (227.1), *meteoris* (63.18), *opisthodomis* (12.3), *prothymia* (26.1), *sirbenam* (146.16), *phrenitis* (123.15), *chamaetorta* (143.11), *encomiographos* (31.2), *philostorgum* (173.15), *gnomas* (44.2), *gnome* (44.8)). A further four were presented in Latin script in either VdH (*schemata* (89.3), *<h>ieron oston* (179.6)), or Haines (*hypothesim* (*Ad M. Caes.* iii.16.1 (p. 104)), *phonemata* (*De Eloquentia* 3.2 (p. 74))), but not in both; in the latter case the difference between editions is not just in the script used,

³³ See, for example, Sankoff et al. 1990.

³⁴ For the question who decides on script choice in code-switches in ancient texts, see Pelttari 2011; Jocelyn 1999: n. 5; see also the discussions on pp. 120–5.

but also the words: we find *phonemata* in Haines' text where we have ῥήματα in VdH (148.14). In several cases, the editors agree on the use of Greek script but not on the Greek, although in no instance does this significantly alter the functional analysis.

A closer look at one of these examples, *hypothesim* at Haines, *Ad M.Caes.* iii.16.1, versus ὑπόθεσιν at VdH 49.10, reveals the difficulties this text poses. Indeed in this example the noun in Latin script has a different morphological ending from the Greek version. We must immediately enquire: how secure is this final nasal and who has made the decision about the choice of script in the editions? Both Mai and Naber imply that the codex reads ὑπόθεσιν *scribas*, with Naber correcting to *scribis*.³⁵ Why Haines has chosen the Latin script and a change in nasal is unclear. VdH notes in his apparatus the additional information that 'υποθεσ inscribas *V corr. Mai*²', which implies that the original text contains the letters *-in* and not an abbreviation (this sometimes occurs in the text: 'littera M et littera N in fine versus per notam – scribuntur'³⁶). Given that the presence of *-in* is likely, the confusion over whether it was the inflectional ending or the beginning of the next word may have been caused by the fact that the letter forms would have been the same in both Latin and Greek script. Although it is currently impossible to verify whether this is consistent across the whole codex, the discussion in the introduction to the facsimile of the Vatican codex suggests that the main text of the Frontonian corpus (whether Latin or Greek script) is written in uncials and the page of a Greek letter not obscured by a later text is written in uncials and without spaces between words.³⁷ Mai supplies a handful of drawings of parts of the text and, usefully, an alphabet chart of the Greek and Latin letters,³⁸ in which both Latin and Greek 'I' and 'N' look the same and the possible lack of word division may have facilitated the option

³⁵ Mai 1823; Naber 1867.

³⁶ VdH xxviii. For the omission of *m* and *n* at the end of lines in early manuscripts, see Lowe 1925: 205–6.

³⁷ Ehrle 1906.

³⁸ Mai 1823 (see cover image for a section).

of segmenting either ὑπόθεσιν *scribas* or ὑπόθεσ *inscribas*.³⁹ The latter interpretation of an ending-less Greek noun would be very unusual and, since *hypothesis* only appears elsewhere in the Frontoian corpus, including later in the same letter, in Greek form and script, the reading in VdH seems more reliable than that in Haines.⁴⁰ In support of a switch into Greek morphology and script, we might note that Fronto's model, Cicero, also employs the term in Greek script in a letter to his brother Quintus (II.16.4).

Diagnosing and interpreting code-switching in ancient texts is difficult. Swain is positive about the prospects suggesting that personal letters might even offer more unadulterated evidence of code-switching than modern oral evidence which is beset by the 'Observer's Paradox'.⁴¹ In this sense with Fronto's correspondence we are in an advantageous position: the texts were probably not doctored for publication and the majority appear more personal in tone than even the Ciceronian letters which, as we have seen in [Chapter 3](#), can be shown to be written with a wider audience in mind or at least with an awareness of the prying eyes of the broader republican elite. But we saw that for code-switching to be valuable we do not necessarily need it to be 'natural' and 'unobserved'. [Chapter 3](#) has shown how its self-conscious use can be just as revealing of attitudes towards language and relationships between members of the elite. In Fronto's correspondence we can assess both the oral-style private output and more carefully worked passages, although we are hampered by the quality of the text as we find it: full of lacunae, uncertain readings and centuries of interference. We carefully navigate these problems, but they still have a cumulative effect both on overall trends and in our close analysis. Nevertheless we are convinced that cautious analysis can still offer important contributions and such a significant set of ancient letters should not be overlooked.

³⁹ We might in fact have expected an interpunct in this precise location: 'nulla interpunctio est nisi punctum quod dicitur medianum et ante et post verba Graeca in textu Latino' (VdH xxviii).

⁴⁰ Haines, like van den Hout, admits to not having seen the codex (1920: vii).

⁴¹ Swain 2002: 145.

Fronto and Friends: Language Choice and Code-Switching

Marcus appears as Fronto's most regular correspondent: over 170 of the approximately 232 extant letters result from this epistolary relationship.⁴² There are also letters to and from Verus, Antoninus Pius and a range of slightly less towering figures.⁴³ Most of the letters are in Latin, but seven are written entirely in Greek. Four of the latter are written to Greeks: letters to and from the historian Appian, to Fronto's rival Herodes Atticus, and to Appius Apollonides, the *ab epistulis graecis* of Marcus and Verus.⁴⁴ Marcus' mother, Domitia Lucilla, is the recipient of two Greek letters. The reason for this linguistic choice has been debated: was she Greek, was Greek 'favoured by the ladies of the court',⁴⁵ or are there more subtle issues at play?⁴⁶ The only other extant letter in Greek is written by Fronto to Marcus on love (a topic with important Greek cultural and literary associations) and the guise of the Platonic dialogue allows him 'to get away with a lot here, in fact even more than he puts on paper'.⁴⁷ Amatory matters very broadly conceived, encompassing *amicitia*, erotic love and affection, consistently draw out Greek, with nearly 8 per cent of the code-switches in the Latin letters sparked by affairs of the heart. Greek enabled specific amatory possibilities to be implied, and, if necessary, denied by the pair, in a way that might have been difficult in Latin (see pp. 207–9). Indeed, to a certain extent all the Greek letters deal with sensitive subjects and relationships: the letters to Domitia are both excuses; Fronto has to deal with an over-generous gift from his client Appian; the letter to Apollonides is one of recommendation and his consolation letter to Herodes Atticus makes it obvious that he is only writing on Marcus' instructions. In the absence of the other side of the epistolary

⁴² The numbers of letters are approximate because scholars do not agree where some fragmentary letters begin and end.

⁴³ For more on the correspondents, see Pflaum 1964.

⁴⁴ See Eck 1992 for an inscription concerning this figure. See Millar 1977: 225–8 for the role of *ab epistulis graecis*.

⁴⁵ See Claassen 2009: 67.

⁴⁶ See Swain 2004: 22–3; Wenskus 2001.

⁴⁷ Richlin 2006a: 117.

conversation in all but the correspondence with Appian and Marcus, it is difficult to diagnose the sociolinguistic negotiations at play, but given Fronto's role as ambassador for Latin and the fact that all the recipients of Greek letters could surely understand Latin, the choice to write in Greek may have been exactly that. The decision to write in a language which was not his *lingua Romana* was probably not simply contingent on the linguistic preferences of the addressee, but offered Fronto 'an indirect method of deflecting criticism',⁴⁸ of criticizing more indirectly and of playing power games.⁴⁹ In these letters Fronto showed that he controlled Greek and through it these awkward situations. As we saw in [Chapter 3](#), 'markedness' is a slippery concept: here the appropriate code is Greek from Fronto's point of view, but it perhaps serves its purpose precisely because it may feel 'marked' to the recipient.

Just under fifty letters, or *c.*20 per cent, display code-switching.⁵⁰ Marcus writes letters containing code-switching marginally more often than Fronto, at a ratio of roughly 26 to 20 per cent, although Fronto code-switches marginally more times than Marcus (75:65).⁵¹ Other correspondents receive letters containing code-switching but replies from these are rare and only Verus provides a letter with his own example ([Table 19](#)).

Code-switching in Fronto's correspondence might be described as intermittent rather than frequent. One hundred and forty-one examples occur across 277 pages of Latin Loeb text (Haines), or on average *c.* 0.5 per page, although clustering, for example in the letter described in detail below, makes this figure only a rough guide. A comparison with Cicero's correspondence, also in the Loeb format, suggests that there is a broad similarity of practice here: as we have seen in [Chapter 3](#)

⁴⁸ Swain 2004: 23.

⁴⁹ For an interesting view on the choice of Greek in these letters, see Swain 2004: 20–6.

⁵⁰ It is difficult to be definitive about these figures; the figure is forty-seven following Haines' divisions.

⁵¹ Valette (2014: 116–17) states that Marcus switches much more frequently than Fronto, but this is not borne out by our analysis.

Table 19 *Number of code-switches by author in the Frontonian correspondence*

Author of letter	No. of code-switches
Fronto	75
Lucius Verus	1
Marcus Aurelius	65
<i>Total</i>	<i>141</i>

we find an average of roughly 1.2 code-switches per page across the letters to Atticus, 0.3 in the letters *Ad Familiares* (excluding correspondents who receive no code-switching) and 0.4 in the letters to Quintus. Across Pliny's correspondence the figure stands at 0.3 per page for Books 1–9 and 0.4 for Book 10, closely mirroring the practice in Cicero's non-Attican correspondence. A similarity between the three epistolary collections comes as no surprise: Cicero was a model for subsequent letter writers, as we saw in [Chapter 2](#), and Fronto repeatedly refers to the influential stylist. To cite just one instance, in response to a request from Marcus for a selection of Cicero's letters (VdH 104.1–3), Fronto responds by sending some excerpts and remarking that

omnes autem Ciceronis epistulas legendas censeo, mea sententia uel magis quam omnes eius orationes: epistulis Ciceronis nihil est perfectius. (VdH 104.12–14)

I think that all Cicero's letters must be read, more than all his speeches, in my opinion; there is nothing more perfect than Cicero's letters.

Our systematic quantitative analysis of the code-switching enables us to counter the impressionistic claim that '[a]lthough Fronto considers Cicero's letters, with their conversational Latin spiced with Greek vocabulary, as the epitome of Latin style, his own is far less interspersed with Greek words, only occasionally a technical term such as σχήματα or εἰκόνες'.⁵² Fronto's correspondence in fact offers code-switching at a slightly higher rate than in Cicero's correspondence *Ad*

⁵² Claassen 2009: 68.

Table 20 *Average number of code-switches per Loeb Latin page for the collections of letters in the database*

Corpus	Average no. of code-switches per page
<i>M. Cornelii Frontonis epistulae</i>	0.5
<i>M. Tulli Ciceronis epistulae ad Atticum</i>	1.2
<i>M. Tulli Ciceronis epistulae ad Familiares</i>	0.3 (excluding correspondents who receive no code-switching)
<i>M. Tulli Ciceronis epistulae ad Quintum fratrem</i>	0.4
<i>C. Plini Caecili Secundi epistularum libri I–IX</i>	0.3
<i>C. Plini Caecili Secundi epistularum liber X</i>	0.4

Familiares or *Ad Quintum fratrem* and Pliny's correspondence. It is true that this average is raised to an extent by clustering of switches in particularly Greek-filled letters, although this clustering occurs across the authors and affects all the averages, so we are comparing like with like (Table 20).

As we have seen in Chapter 2, the majority of the code-switching of the epistolographers analysed in the database is intra-sentential. Only around 16 of 141 examples in Fronto's correspondence might be classed as inter-sentential, around 11 per cent (Table 21). If we did not already know this from other evidence, the high percentage of intra-sentential switching would have encouraged us to see Fronto and Marcus as proficient balanced bilinguals. We know from other sources that Fronto would have learnt Greek in childhood with his paedagogus (Quint. 1.1.12–13) and later in life with Greek teachers. His wife G/Cratia was also possibly of Greek origin.⁵³ Marcus chose to write his *Meditations* in Greek and, of his four

⁵³ See Richlin 2011 for the debate on and possible relevance of the first initial of Fronto's wife's name (preferring *Gratia*) and the contention that Champlin (1980: 26, 151) is wrong about her probably being from Ephesus.

Functional Analysis of the Code-Switches

Table 21 *Number of examples of inter- or intra-sentential switching by author in Fronto's correspondence*

Author of letter	Inter	Intra	Intra?	Total
Fronto	5	70		75
Lucius Verus		1		1
Marcus Aurelius	11	50	4	65
<i>Total</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>121</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>141</i>

teachers in the arts of oratory and rhetoric, three taught Greek and only one, Fronto, Latin (*Hist. Aug.* 2.1–4, Dio 72.35.1–2).⁵⁴ The intra-sentential switching might serve to reinforce and construct the intimacy between Fronto and Marcus that is so regularly and deeply expressed in the letters. But we need to be cautious. We have already seen the problems with poor definition of concepts such as ‘intimacy’ and ‘in-group’ (Chapter 2 and 3) and should be wary of making one-to-one equations based on simplifications of modern sociolinguistic research, in this case assuming that intra-sentential directly equates with ‘intimate in-group relations’. More evidence is required than simply the frequency of intra-sentential switching to understand the complexities of intimacy and the politics of *amicitia* in this elite Roman environment where code-switching could serve a range of purposes, including distancing and veiled criticism, as we have seen in Chapter 3. The functions of the code-switching must be explored in more detail and within the broader context of the language and content of the letters between Marcus and Fronto.

Functional Analysis of the Code-Switches

The nine functions assigned to the code-switches in Fronto's correspondence may not seem completely coherent as a group, but have been generated by the evidence: *description*, *exclamation*, *GCS*, *instruction/request*, *metalinguistic*, *naming*,

⁵⁴ For the meditations, see Rutherford 1989.

quotation, referential and *wordplay* (Table 28 (Appendix); for a description of the functional categories, see Chapter 1). As we have seen, any analysis of this kind is subjective: we are constantly reminded of the inadequacies of our appreciation of the cultural context and question interpretations which are based on incomplete texts. In addition, as we discussed in previous chapters, code-switches may offer multiple functions, so in the case of a request from Marcus to Fronto for reading to free him ἐκ τῶν κατείληφναι ὄν φροντίζων ‘from the cares that trouble’ (VdH 105.16), this switch is perhaps intended to soften the request, to evoke the cultural Greekness of reading for pleasure and, perhaps, in the final word to play on Fronto’s name. The database provides the most important function of each code-switch as far as can be recovered; in a few cases more than one function is recorded, resulting in a higher number of total functions (155) than individual instances of code-switches (141).

Over half the instances (62 per cent) of the salient functions assigned fall under the category GCS, within which the subcategory ‘Literature/Rhetoric/Grammar’ is easily the largest with nearly 70 per cent of the examples and 42 per cent of the total functions. This comes as no surprise: the language of instruction on literature, rhetoric and grammar in the Graeco-Roman world was Greek. Latin creates its own terminology and claims some ground over time, particularly from the Ciceronian era, but the Hellenic origins are unforgettable.⁵⁵ Fronto is Marcus’ teacher of Latin rhetoric and literature and many of the letters consider these themes; it is therefore completely natural that a lover of tradition such as Fronto should reach to Greek for ‘le mot juste’, following no doubt his own training probably from several Greek teachers, of whom three, Aridelus, Athenodotus and Dionysius,⁵⁶ are mentioned in the letters. In some of these code-switches other functions might be involved, but

⁵⁵ For literate education in the Roman world, see Kennedy 1972; Morgan 1998; Swain 2002: 131–6.

⁵⁶ For Aridelus, paedagogus to a young Fronto, see VdH 79.25–80.3; for the *magister et parens*, Athenodotus, who taught philosophy and rhetoric, see VdH 17.8; 65.23; 135.4; for Dionysius Tenuis, the rhetor, see VdH 17.8; 152.2.

the overwhelming function seems to be the need to express key terms in the language that created and promoted those terms: it taps into the external associations beyond the lexeme itself to evoke a broader cultural world and to delve into a shared education and learning between Fronto and Marcus.⁵⁷ Several of these terms do not have precise equivalents in Latin, so could come under the banner ‘lexical need’ (see Chapter 2), but by the second century AD educated Romans were able to draw on an extensive Latin lexicon and the motivation is more than simply filling gaps, indeed several of the Greek switches are found alongside Latin equivalents, for example, *uerba noua fingere* with ὀνομαστοποιεῖν (VdH 45.19). The key point seems to be that the Greek term is more appropriate to evoke the necessary associations for the didactic, relational and broader cultural context.

At this juncture it is worth highlighting a potential terminological issue: ‘metalinguistic’ has been chosen to refer to the switches whose primary function is to comment on the specific nature of the use of language. Others, such as Swain, would refer to all the literary/rhetorical/grammatical terms employed in Greek as ‘metalinguistic’ code-switching.⁵⁸ This seems questionable: the texts in which these switches occur are discussions (of similes, etc.) that themselves could be termed ‘metalinguistic’, so arguably the switch of language ought to be conditioned by another function. A pair of letters exchanged between Marcus and Fronto in 139/140 will serve to illustrate this point.⁵⁹ At this stage Marcus is about eighteen and Fronto is over twice his age. The letter from Marcus to his *magister* is brief and asks for advice on similes. It contains two code-switches, εἰκόνας and ἐνθένδ’ εἰκόνα ποιοῦμεν (VdH 40.8), both referring to ‘similes’ and motivated, not by lexical

⁵⁷ Following the terms of Blom and Gumperz 1972, this code-switching represents a metaphorical from a situational usage.

⁵⁸ Note Swain’s comments on Fronto’s correspondence: ‘[t]he vast majority of the Greek code-switches in the Letters are in fact metalinguistic: Greek remained essential to grammatical and rhetorical instruction’ (2004: 22, also 27).

⁵⁹ For a brief presentation of the debate on the dates of these letters, see van den Hout 1999: 107–8.

need (Latin has *imago* on offer), but by the cultural associations which Greek can evoke in this domain. The letter which follows from Fronto is several times longer and constitutes a confident didactic piece: the first half examines the use of similes to flatter Marcus' father and the second half launches into a magisterial discussion of the function of similes and distinguishing features of topics and images based explicitly on the teachings of Theodorus of Gadara. Code-switching does not feature in the section concerning Antoninus Pius, but sweeps in when the technical discussion begins.

postea ego quamcumque εἰκόνα huic addidero, non aequè placebit tibi ut haec quae ad patrem tuum pertinet: tam hoc scio quam tu nouisti. quamobrem ipse aliam εἰκόνα nullam adiciam, sed rationem, qua tute quaeras, ostendam. et, amem te, tu quas εἰκόνας in eandem rem demonstrata ratione quaesiueris et inueneris, mittito mihi, ut, si fuerint scitae atque concinnae, gaudeam. iam primum quidem illud scis, εἰκόνα ei rei adsumi, ut aut ornet quid aut deturpet aut aequiperet aut deminuat aut ampliet aut ex minus credibili credibile efficiat. ubi nihil eorum usus erit, locus εἰκόνοσ non erit. postea ubi rei propositae imaginem scribes, ut, si pingeres, insignia animaduertes eius rei cuius imaginem pingeres, item in scribendo facies. insignia autem cuiusque rei multis modis eliges: τὰ ὁμογενῇ, τὰ ὁμοειδῇ, τὰ ὅλα, τὰ μέρη, τὰ ἴδια, τὰ διάφορα, τὰ ἀντικείμενα, τὰ ἐπόμενα καὶ παρακολουθοῦντα, τὰ ὀνόματα, <τὰ ἐνούσια>, τὰ συμβεβηκότα, τὰ στοιχεῖα et fere omnia ex quibus argumenta sumuntur: de quibus plerumque audisti, cum Θεοδώρου locos ἐπιχειρημάτων tractaremus. eorum si quid memoriae tuae elapsum est, non inutile erit eadem nos denuo retractare, ubi tempus aderit. in hac εἰκόνε, quam de patri tuo teque depinxi, ἐν τῷ τῶν συμβεβηκότων ἔλαβον, τὸ ὅμοιον τῆς ἀσφαλείας καὶ τῆς ἀπολαύσεως. nunc tu per hasce uias ac semitas, quas supra ostendi quaeres, quonam modo Aenariam commodissime peruenias. mihi dolor cubiti haud multum sedatus est. uale, domine, cum ingenio eximio. dominae meae matri tuae dic salutem. τὴν δὲ ὅλην τῶν εἰκόνων τέχνην alias diligentius et subtilius persequemur; nunc capita rerum attigi. (VdH 41.5–42.3)

After that, whatever simile I may add, you will not like it so much as this one relating to your father. I know this as well as you do. So I will add no further simile myself, but rather explain the method by which *you* may search them out. Then, if you please, once you have had the method revealed to you, send me whatever similes you may think up and discover for yourself, for me to delight in if they prove to be well conceived and elegantly executed.

Now, in the first place, you are well aware that a simile is applied in order to adorn something, or denigrate it, or furnish a comparison for it, or belittle it, or aggrandize it, or to make it credible when it was not before. Where none of these operations is in question, there will be no place for a simile. Secondly,

Functional Analysis of the Code-Switches

when you are composing a simile for a subject you have in mind, just as if you were painting, you would notice the distinguishing characteristics of the thing you were painting, so too when writing. Now, there are various ways in which you will pick out a given thing's distinguishing characteristics: by reference to members of the same class, things of the same appearance, wholes, parts, individual traits, divergences, opposites, consequences and concomitants, names, <...>, accidental attributes, elements, and just about everything on which an argument can be based. You heard a good deal about this when we were studying Theodorus on commonplaces of argument. If any of it has slipped from your memory, there will be some point in our going over the same ground again when there is time. In the simile I painted about your father and you, I took one of those coincidental attributes, your similarity of stability and advantages. It is now for you to work out, following the ways and paths I showed to you a moment ago, how to reach Aenaria in the most convenient way.

The pain in my elbow has not abated much. Farewell, my Lord, man of rare talent. Give my greetings to my Lady your mother. We'll follow up on the full skill of similes more conscientiously and in finer detail on another occasion; this time I have only touched lightly on the major headings. (trans. Trapp 2003 letter 53, adapted)

In general terms most of the second half of the letter cited here is metalinguistic in content. As for the switching, Fronto's epistolary response seems to follow closely Marcus' request so we could see the switching, starting with repetition of the term for simile, as triggered by, or directly mirroring, the code-switching that Marcus has already employed. It is, however, not clear that triggering can work in the same way as in conversations: perhaps we assume that writers have letters in front of them when replying, but does language use have the same cognitive impact when it is spoken by an interlocutor, as opposed to being read or read aloud by a recipient, especially if this happened sometime earlier? At any rate, in view of the standard practice of switching in this domain in other letters, it is not unreasonable to suppose that the switching may have been undertaken irrespective of triggering.⁶⁰ It has therefore,

⁶⁰ A note appears in the online database when it seems that a switch may have been, at least in part, triggered by the same or similar switch in a previous letter within the epistolary conversation. This seems relevant in a handful of the cases, but in no instance seems to be the salient reason for the switch. A word of caution should again be sounded: Fronto's correspondence is a fragmentary collection and our earliest version, from the fifth century, itself subsequently jumbled, was not

in all but the cases of naming, been categorized, like Marcus' code-switch, as GCS Literature/Rhetoric/Grammar. The first five intra-sentential switches in Fronto's letter are forms of the noun εἰκῶν without article, a feature which follows Latin practice rather than Greek. The sixth switch constitutes a series of Greek terms applied to rhetoric since Aristotle, complete with their expected articles; Fronto here reminds his pupil that he has heard all about these when they studied the teachings of the rhetorician Theodorus of Gadara, who was tutor to Tiberius and often cited by Quintilian.⁶¹ The name of this Greek tutor provokes another switch (there are a total of four switches for names in the correspondence),⁶² although the title of the work, which we might have expected to be entirely in Greek, is presented as a hybrid: neither *loci argumentorum* nor τόποι ἐπιχειρημάτων but *loci ἐπιχειρημάτων*, a statement, perhaps, of the shared nature of this once entirely Greek domain.

Another 'hybrid' follows soon after, with *in hac* εἰκόνε, where this time the mixture⁶³ is word-internal and the opposite of Cicero's famous Latin plus Greek ending *facteon* at *Ad Atticum* 1.16.13 or indeed Fronto's *-tata* forms (all discussed in Chapter 2 (pp. 76–80)). The majority of the intra-sentential code-switches in Fronto's corpus concern nouns or noun phrases, often with adjectives. Where the readings are uncontroversial and in Greek script, most of these nouns and adjectives appear with Greek morphology, the form εἰκόνε (VdH 41.22) being an exception. This Greek word appears nine times in code-switches and otherwise consistently appears with Greek morphology in this letter and elsewhere. The problem when dealing with manuscript transmission is that the difference orthographically between a Greek epsilon (the extant) and iota (the expected) is trivial and may be, for example, the result of

arranged in chronological order. Firm dates are rarely provided in the text and our chronological understanding of the letters has to be treated with care (Champlin 1974), so our 'timeline' for triggering may not always be secure.

⁶¹ Quintilian, *Inst.* 2.15.16; 3.1.17–18; 3.6.2; 3.10.3; 3.10.26; 4.1.23; 5.13.59. For Theodorus, see Grube 1959; Kennedy 1972: 340–2.

⁶² For code-switching and names, see Adams 2003a: 369–80.

⁶³ Holford-Strevens 1991: 78.

miscopying.⁶⁴ If the reading εἰκόνε is in fact correct, then we might not want to see it as a hybrid as such, but perhaps an example of a feature of the MLF in operation; that is, the lack of an ablative in Greek has resulted in what could be termed a ‘Matrix Language override’ (see [Chapter 2](#)).

The next switch in the letter unusually contains a finite verb (ἐλάβον), and refers to a feature which has already been mentioned in Greek: τὰ συμβεβηκότα. Again, this comment could have been expressed in Latin (perhaps with *accidentia*) and this switch has been classified in the database as having the function GCS. But there are alternative interpretations: we could count this as a referential switch, or, following Conversation Analysis, as a switch triggered by the mention of the Greek term earlier in the letter. We might even, given the unusual nature of this switch from a linguistic point of view, consider that this may be a deliberate imitation of the style of a Greek rhetorical manual.

The final intra-sentential switch, again referring to similes, occurs at the end of the letter when Fronto explains that the main headings have been touched upon, but that a full analysis of the whole art of simile creation will be pursued when they next meet (over-long private letters are to be avoided, according to the epistolary theorists: *in familiaribus litteris primo breuitas obseruanda* (Iulius Victor 27)). Just prior to the close of the letter, Fronto states that *nunc tu per hasce uias ac semitas, quas supra ostendi, quaeres, quonam modo Aenariam*⁶⁵ *commodissime peruenias* ‘now you will search for these roads and ways, which I showed above, by which route you may come most conveniently to Aenaria’, harking back to the earlier *sed rationem qua tute quaeras ostendam* ‘but I will show you the method for finding them’ at the start of the passage above. A parallelism seems to exist here between the setting out by Fronto and the search by Marcus for routes and ways, on the one hand, and

⁶⁴ Trapp’s 2003 edition of this letter (no. 53) has εἰκόνι, possibly following Orth as cited in the *app. crit.* of VdH.

⁶⁵ *Aenaria* is modern Ischia; in his letter Marcus mentions a fictitious island lake on Ischia used in one of the similes.

ratio, on the other, which may indicate a bilingual thought process: a translation for *ratio* would be μέθοδος, which may have inspired the *uiaae* and *semitae* and consequently allows a neat link with travelling to the island of Marcus' simile.⁶⁶ This whole passage relies on the shared cultural background and bilingualism of both sender and recipient to be successful. The assignation of all but one of these switches as GCS Literature/Rhetoric/Grammar highlights the salience of Greek in this domain and the reliance on choice of language to evoke cultural associations, especially shared education.

Quotation represents the second most frequent function of code-switching in the correspondence at a quarter of the functional tokens, which again, unsurprisingly, has twenty-eight literary examples leading the way at three-quarters of the total examples of quotation, followed by five imagined quotations, two self-quotations, two proverbs and one oral quotation.⁶⁷ As we saw in [Chapters 1](#) and [3](#), quotations need not be cited in the original, for example, in a letter to Papirius Paetus, Cicero cites a Greek snippet in Latin and then notes, *Graece hoc melius; tu, si voles, interpretabere* 'It's better in Greek: translate it if you like' (*Ad Familiares* ix.26), and Fronto also demonstrates that direct citation is not always a default option: *'uel fumum', inquit, 'patriae' Graius poeta* "even the smoke of the fatherland" as the Greek poet says' (VdH 72.4), so the choice to quote in Greek can be assessed as a deliberate one.

The five examples of imagined quotations in Greek found in Fronto's correspondence are all included in the database with more than one function and demonstrate the multifunctionality of code-switching and the reliance on Greek for certain domains. Two examples of 'imagined quotation' from Fronto's pen involve the concoction of a mock scene of the teaching of philosophy, which is a discipline that he jealously resents, not least for its claim over Marcus:

enimvero ad philosophos librum legas: magistro interpretanti tacitus adtendas; intellexisse adnuas; alii legentibus ipse plerumque dormites; audias τί τὸ πρῶτον;

⁶⁶ See Trapp 2003: 285.

⁶⁷ Citations of Latin literature outweigh the Greek in the letters.

Functional Analysis of the Code-Switches

τί τὸ δεύτερον; *diu multumque numerari*; εἰ ἡμέρα ἐστίν, φῶς ἐστὶν *fenestris patentibus laborari. securus inde abeas, cui nihil per noctem meditandum aut conscribendum, nihil magistro recitandum, nihil de memoria pronuntiandum, nulla <uerbi> indagatio, nullius synonymi ornatus, nihil de Graeco in nostram linguam pariter <con>uertendum.* (VdH 151.20–152.2)

For sure you would read a book in the philosophy class: you would in silence listen to the teacher explaining it, you would nod that you have understood, and whilst the others were reading you would mostly sleep. You would hear ‘What is the premise? What is the consequence?’ repeated at length, the point ‘if it is day, there is light’ laboured with the windows open. You would go away from there content, with nothing to keep you up all night thinking and writing, nothing to recite to a teacher, nothing to commit to memory, no words to hunt down, no ornamenting with synonyms, nothing to translate in parallel from Greek to our language.⁶⁸

Here one basic function of the switches is to present imagined quotations, but the function GCS Philosophy could also be added because the choice of Greek has surely been triggered by its undoubtedly close associations with the philosophical domain. Champlin notes that in Fronto’s century ‘Latin died as a vehicle of philosophical inquiry. Greek was the language of philosophy, and Athens remained its home.’⁶⁹ We might also wonder whether the Greek here is part of a strategy to convey a distancing effect: the deliberately undermining simplistic phraseology, the focus on the apparent banality of the content and choice to cite not in *nostra lingua* (which would have been easy enough since Cicero and others provide it: *si dies est, lucet*)⁷⁰ may all reinforce Fronto’s negative attitude towards the subject that was stealing away his beloved pupil.

Another example of an imagined quotation from an early letter, written by Marcus to Fronto sometime in 143, contains a fabricated victory declamation for his tutor, who has won the prize for being the greatest lover.

cape coronam: atque etiam praeco pronuntiet palam pro tuo tribunali uictoriam istam tuam: Μ. Κορνήλιος Φρόντων ὑπατος νικᾷ, στεφανοῦται τὸν ἀγῶνα τῶν μεγάλων φιλοτησίων. (VdH 25.25–6)

⁶⁸ The translation of *pariter <con>uertendum* is not straightforward.

⁶⁹ Champlin 1980: 57.

⁷⁰ CIC. *Inv.* 1.86; *Lucull.* 143; Sacerd. Gramm. 6.469.11.

Imperial Relations

Take the crown and let the herald proclaim publicly before your tribunal this your victory: '*M. Cornelius Fronto, consul, is the winner. He is crowned in the contest of the Great-Love-Games.*'

This switch is the only example in Fronto's correspondence to have been assigned three functions in the database: Quotation: imagined; GCS Amor; GCS Contest/Entertainment. Van den Hout remarks that 'Greek words are used because in the Greek world such terms were apparently the official words by which the name of the conqueror in a competition was announced, and Marcus is in Naples, where he may have attended such contests'.⁷¹ This comment states Marcus' whereabouts confidently, although nothing in the letter itself confirms this and on the preceding page the commentator has noted that circumstantial evidence only 'seems to indicate that he is not in Rome but with Pius in Naples'. Whatever Marcus' precise location, van den Hout might be seen, in some sense, to be selecting a straightforward functional analysis: Greek is used because that is the language in which the declaration would have been made. This might be seen as equivalent to the 'imagined quotation' function: the switch is needed in order to present the quotation in the appropriate language. But other functions seem important here too: whether or not Marcus is in Greek-speaking Naples, agonistic contexts consistently draw out Greek in all our epistolographers and there is an argument for evocation of cultural associations which cannot be adequately established through Latin. Similarly, this is not just any old contest, but a *lovers'* contest, at which Marcus declares he has failed and must concede to Fronto, who has obliterated the competition: *tu plane omnes, qui umquam amatores fuerunt, uicisti amando* 'with your love you have clearly beaten all who ever loved!'. The letter is a saccharine affair detailing Marcus' admiration for Fronto: matters of the heart elicit Greek across the correspondence with 8 per cent of code-switches assigned to the broad category GCS Amor and an entire discourse on love written entirely in Greek by Fronto to Marcus (see pp. 207–9). Again we make the assumption that Greek channelled a range

⁷¹ Van den Hout 1999: 65.

of meanings in this realm better than Latin. Clearly, however, as we saw above, it might be wrong to assign this switching a straightforward function of intimacy. Here the quotation could be read as exuberantly affectionate, but could equally be described as jovial – it is declared in public and by someone else – and so might fit with the strategy of indirectness and distancing that we read in Fronto’s Greek letters, and this time enacted in the amatory realm to safeguard the actors involved.

‘Colourful like a Pyrrhic dance’: The Relationship of Marcus and Fronto through Language

In [Chapter 3](#), we saw the flexibility and power of Greek in negotiating complexities of elite relations and the fluidity of domains. In appreciating this range of use, however, contextualization was essential, both within the epistolary realm and beyond, using ancient sources by, and about, Cicero and friends. With Fronto we are in a less fortunate position: Fronto’s output *is* his letters and Marcus’ relations with his tutor are famously only mentioned in passing in his pre-amble to the *Meditations* (1.11). After all his efforts, Fronto is royally snubbed, although perhaps Marcus felt his old master would not have appreciated an acknowledgement in a philosophical context. In any case, we only know this relationship through the letters and this makes it all the more important to employ our comparative understanding of the use of Greek to exploit the limited evidence we have.

The general contours of the relationship of Marcus and Fronto through the letters can be relatively easily described. At first, the budding emperor is apparently obsessed both with his teacher and the pursuit of rhetoric; they spend a great deal of time flattering each other and indulging in, what seem to us at least, amatory games. Fronto is clearly proud of himself and his pedagogical charge. Later the letters seem to focus increasingly on ailments and we find Fronto to be a hypochondriac and, if we read between the lines, possibly attempting to manipulate Marcus into spending more time with him. In the final phase of the correspondence, Fronto

has given up beating about the bush: although the letters are still affectionate, the gushing exuberance of the first few years has largely disappeared and Fronto expresses his frustration at rhetoric being sidelined, and, of course, he along with it.⁷² In his view, Marcus' new love, philosophy, cannot be practised without rhetoric,⁷³ and Marcus is stupid to turn his back on his beloved subject. Marcus in turn starts to lose patience: he is weighed down by ruling an Empire and has little time to pander to his old teacher.⁷⁴

These shaky, over-general contours have been formed by modern readers, using a fragmentary set of letters, which is the result of a lengthy and problematic transmission process. There are dangers with using Fronto's correspondence to track anything over time: as we have seen, the chronological ordering of the letters is extremely uncertain and the corpus is not complete. Nevertheless, we can perhaps content ourselves with the fact that what we have is unlikely to be highly unrepresentative of the letters that passed between Fronto and Marcus, not least because, had there been effusive later letters we would probably expect them to have made the cut, given that they are included in the early correspondence, and we might expect some of the thinly veiled disgruntlement from Fronto and impatience from Marcus to have been edited away. As Champlin remarks 'notably the trivia of *Ad. M. Caes. v* ..., if anything, smack of the hagiographer ready to publish the master's every scrap'.⁷⁵ If we do take the letters as at least partly representative of the dialogue between tutor and pupil,

⁷² The late letter in which Fronto describes how he loves the man more than the boy, rings somewhat hollow compared to the exuberance of the early interactions (VdH 92.11–94.3).

⁷³ The basic philosophy is set out in the margin to Fronto's *De Eloquentia* written for Marcus: *dabit philosophia quod dicas, dabit eloquentia quo modo dicas* 'Philosophy will provide you with what to say, eloquence the way to say it' (VdH 143.18–49).

⁷⁴ See VdH 103.17–104.3, where Marcus produces a short letter, owing to pressing duties.

⁷⁵ Champlin 1974: 157. Sadly, we know little of the early history of the letters. They seem to have been known in the fourth century, but who dealt with them up to that point is not known: some have hypothesized that Fronto's son-in-law, Aufidius Victorinus, or another male descendant keen to revive the family's fortunes may have had a hand (see Davenport and Manley 2014: 7 for references).

can the use of Greek within the letters tell us anything about their changing relationship?

Perhaps the most enigmatic letter in the collection, and certainly one of the most important for considering the relationship between Marcus and Fronto, is the discourse on love penned by Fronto in his forties to his late-teen protégé in 139, at the beginning of their association (VdH 250.8–255.3). Scholars have struggled to make sense of this piece, based on the *Phaedrus* of Plato, a dialogue well known to second-century literati,⁷⁶ which contemplates pederastic relationships. Wordsworth took it seriously as an attempt by Fronto to steer Marcus away from unchaste love;⁷⁷ van den Hout viewed it as a trivial work in which Fronto presents himself ‘in jest’ as a pedagogue;⁷⁸ Richlin considers it as possible evidence for a ‘careful and secret’ pederastic relationship;⁷⁹ and Swain, probably most wisely, admits that ‘[w]hat or whom Fronto is really getting at in the erotic letter is unclear’.⁸⁰ The range of responses to the piece might have been replicated in the ancient interaction: the ambiguity in the content was probably deliberate on Fronto’s part. Richlin argues that Fronto was daring to play the pederastic game whilst still retaining ‘plausible deniability’.⁸¹ Fronto could have written his pastiche-Platonic discourse on love in Latin, but the choice of Greek was no doubt deliberate. The Greek again lends a distancing effect: these are more obviously the words of a ‘detached other’, if he needed to spin it that way. One could not conceive of the opening ὦ φίλε παῖ (mirroring the ὦ φίλε Φαῖδρε of the original dialogue) being possible in a Latin text directed at the future emperor, nor the invocation of *erastes* ‘active lover’ and *eromenos* ‘passive partner, usually younger’,⁸² which in any elite Roman

⁷⁶ For this text in the second century, see Trapp 1990, who states that ‘[f]ew works were more firmly entrenched in the “cultural syllabus” of Hellenic *paideia*’ (141).

⁷⁷ Wordsworth 1883: 5–7.

⁷⁸ VdH p. 560.

⁷⁹ Richlin 2006b: 17.

⁸⁰ Swain 2004: 21.

⁸¹ Richlin 2006a: 117; 2006b: 17.

⁸² Dover 1978 is the seminal text on ancient Greek pederasty.

context could be dangerous, let alone in this most exalted company.⁸³

We do not know whether Marcus accepted the invitation to join Fronto in a trip to the banks of the Ilissus (VdH 255.2–3), but his response to the piece is powerful: he has the confidence to write in Latin about his love for Fronto, to describe himself within the first few words as *erasten tuum* (turning the relationship as expected in terms of age and in Fronto's text on its head) and to claim that he loves Fronto more than Socrates loved Phaedrus (VdH 249.1–250.7). The code-switching in this reply occurs in just two places: *erasten tuum* (249.1) and τῶν ἐρωμένων (249.13), keeping the terms of the relationship appropriately Greek. Such concepts are simply not possible in this Roman context (where the only proper options for an *eromenos* are women and slaves) and perhaps the effect of the choice of text in Latin, and *not* a response in Greek, actually has the effect of expressing negativity towards Fronto's innuendo and subtext. Marcus replies in an obviously over-exaggerated way, inverting the terms and letting hyperbole range freely precisely because there may be no substance to any hope of a pederastic relationship and no contemporary (Fronto, or any other unintended reader) would take his letter seriously. At least this could be one way of reading the sociolinguistic dynamics of this interaction: there have been as many interpretations as there have been commentators. Whilst speculation on the precise nature of their relationship seems doomed to aporia, it is worth remembering that, although we should be cautious about taking the expressions of love at face value and in our terms, given the difference in vocabulary and norms in the highly homosocial ancient environment, there does seem to be something qualitatively different here compared with other epistolary close relationships.⁸⁴ Whilst urging restraint on diagnosing erotic content, Swain nonetheless admits that 'there is nothing in the early period to compare with the lovers'

⁸³ Fronto's choice of the term ἀ<ν>τεραστής in a letter to Herodes Atticus to refer to his rivalry for Marcus' affection complicates further our understanding of the implications of this concept (VdH 17.13).

⁸⁴ See [Chapter 3](#) for different linguistic strategies employed for a range of relationships.

talk used by Marcus and Fronto’.⁸⁵ Numerous letters could be advanced to support this claim: for example, a letter from the AD 140s in which Marcus writes that he wishes he could run and fly to his Fronto and soothe his poorly foot, helping him into the bath (VdH 1.9–2.17),⁸⁶ or others where Fronto describes his desire to kiss Marcus (VdH 46.17–47.14; 65.7–67.15).⁸⁷ The language used in these interactions allows the pair to play constant games of power negotiation, which cannot be seen on a straightforward content-based reading. Not only do we see Marcus inverting the *erastes-eromenos* relationship, but an apparently highly affectionate farewell address to Fronto in a letter from their early relationship, *uale mi semper anima dulcissima* (30.13), may present a subtext probably not lost on Fronto: ‘[t]his is almost certainly a female form of address, used between women and to women. Marcus is suggesting that he wears the trousers’.⁸⁸

In terms of the use of Greek within the Latin letters over time we find 127 code-switches in total by Marcus and Fronto to each other that can be dated with a degree of confidence to one of two periods: AD 139–145 and 145 onwards. Seventy-nine of these occur in the early years of their association, up until the marriage of Marcus to Faustina, and forty-eight over the whole of the rest of their correspondence. Although the numbers of examples are not large, there does seem to be an indication of changing practices.⁸⁹ Marcus, for example, uses

⁸⁵ Swain 2004: 20.

⁸⁶ Fronto’s response to this letter where he remarks that Marcus wants to run and fly to him *quod est amatorum proprium* ‘as lovers do’ (VdH 3.3) suggests some nervousness on his part: he notes that Marcus’ mother already jokes that she is jealous of Fronto – what if she were to read the letter (VdH 3.4–6) – and asks Marcus to keep the details of their love private (VdH 5.11–12).

⁸⁷ Kissing was a conventional part of male greeting, but the description of kisses between Marcus and Fronto in the letters sometimes appears to go beyond the expected, non-sexual social norms, see Richlin 2006a: 123–6; 2006b: 19, 26. Fronto discusses the kiss between Verus and himself, which was undertaken in private to avoid jealousy from other courtiers (VdH 111.26–112.12); in this case we should presumably not impute erotic content.

⁸⁸ Swain 2004: 21. For *anima* as a ‘female form’ of address, see Adams 1995: 120; 2016: 261–2; Dickey 2002: 158–9.

⁸⁹ These figures present a slightly simplified picture: functions with question marks in the table and database are included in the totals with the more certain examples of

more switches in the early period, fifty-two as opposed to just twelve later. He also, in the early period, largely uses switches with two functions: GCS Literature/Rhetoric/Grammar at 38 per cent and literary quotations at 29 per cent, demonstrating his facility in both languages in the sphere of his education with Fronto, sometimes with some considerable skill, as we shall see below. In the later period, the function of his code-switching is more varied and only three examples occur for quotation and in the domain of Literature/Rhetoric/Grammar. Fronto's code-switching conversely does not tail off over time with twenty-seven switches in the early period and thirty-six in the later. His practice does change, however: in period 1 the vast majority of his switches (81 per cent) have been described in the database as GCS Literature/Rhetoric/Grammar, unsurprising given his didactic mission. In the later period this percentage slips to around half the instances and a quarter is given to quotations of Greek literature, a feature which he did not admit in the early days of the relationship. Perhaps he is, consciously or subconsciously, aping Marcus' earlier practice from their more intimate period of association.

The code-switching is never loosely employed: as we saw above, Fronto and Marcus are meticulous about their use of language. Fronto even explicitly remarks on Marcus' code-switching:

enimvero omnia istaec inter Graecos uersus Latina ita scite alternata sunt a te et interposita, ut est ille in pyrrhicha uersicolorum discursus, quom amicti cocco alii, alii luteo et ostro et purpura, alii aliisque cohaerentes concursant. (VdH 8.20–9.3)

Indeed all that Latin is interwoven by you and alternates with Greek verses as skilfully as the movements of the multi-coloured performers in the Pyrrhic dance when they run together blending now with these, now with those, dressed some in scarlet, others in yellow, and purple and violet.

This commentary appears in response to a letter against sleep from Marcus to Fronto in 145, containing multiple code-switches, including six from the *Odyssey* and one from

the type and only the first function for switches with multiple functions has been included.

Callimachus (cited in [Chapter 2](#)). Here the code-switching must have been laboriously thought through and arranged and Fronto appears to appreciate the artistry, and uses a favourite analogy of his to praise it, that between language and dress, this time in a ludic and dynamic context.⁹⁰ If the Pyrrhic dance referred to here is the imperial *lusus Troiae*, then there may be a double reference: not only to the interweaving of colours but also to the Greek context of the foundation of Rome.⁹¹ In a short discussion of Marcus’ code-switching, Wenskus notes that she can see Fronto warning Marcus about the risks of overdoing code-switching here;⁹² this may be an over-interpretation, since there seems to be no particular reason to consider the praise as not genuine.⁹³ Greek, used cautiously and with skill under the appropriate conditions, ought not to provoke censure but rather forms part of the construction of an elite Roman discourse and one way through which the relationship between Marcus and Fronto could be performed.

Even (or especially?) when Fronto and Marcus are engaged in the most intimate and private discussions, and seem to be writing freely, they write with careful reflection and judicious analysis of the terms, never leaving the world of literature and learning far behind. In the outpouring of emotion from Marcus in the letter of the lovers’ contest cited on p. 203, Fronto’s wife is mentioned as a rival lover of Fronto and provokes a citation from Plautus (VdH 26.6–7) and, in talking about being filled with love, Marcus cites Naevius (VdH 26.15–16). Marcus parades his learning and is cautious not to commit errors in writing to his *magister*, constantly circumspect in the construction of their relationship, trying simultaneously to satisfy the expectations of Roman society, Fronto and himself. Meanwhile Fronto has to negotiate a tricky relationship as *magister* to a

⁹⁰ For Fronto’s comparing of language to dress, see VdH 19.3–6; 88.8–10; 158.7; 159.13–14; 215.16–20. For an example with the same intersection of language, dress and performance, see VdH 154.14–20.

⁹¹ For this view, see Fleury and Demougin 2003: 48 n. 10.

⁹² Wenskus 2003: 312.

⁹³ For this view, see Valette 2014: 102.

Caesar.⁹⁴ In Roman epistolography, public and private spheres are blurred and the dilemma constantly arises of ‘how much of one’s “self” to put on the line’.⁹⁵ Although many of these letters were apparently meant for the correspondents’ eyes only, Roman elite epistolography often seems to have been written with an awareness of the potential gaze of the networks of friends, and enemies.

***Lingua Romana or utraque lingua?* Fronto’s View of Language, Bilingualism and Culture**

Fronto is the arch-Latinist and a ‘linguistic nationalist’:⁹⁶ so renowned for his purity of language amongst contemporaries that Aulus Gellius can deploy him repeatedly as his champion guardian of the Latin language.⁹⁷ His letters promote the view that Latin can, and must, serve every linguistic purpose, especially if attention is paid to the full range of the language, current and past. He only once uses the common phrase *utraque lingua*, which can be used to refer to Roman bilingualism, to reference prosaically the use of Greek and Latin in letters deployed by different Greek and Roman annalists and other historians (VdH 124.10–11) respectively, and promotes instead a notion of *lingua Romana*, namely the use of proper Latin, as *nostra lingua*.

On the surface, it therefore seems that his practice in the letters, which includes writing Greek letters and code-switching into Greek in his Latin, might show misalignment from his theory. Indeed, Marcus expresses surprise that Fronto thinks that one of the best things he has written is in Greek and remembers that he has recently been chastised himself for such a practice.

⁹⁴ On this point, Freisenbruch (2004: 251) flags up the example of VdH 62.8–63.11, an account of Marcus’ activities that day and an outpouring of his longing and love for Fronto, but containing a comment on his choice of words: *fauces foui potius quam dicerem gargarissau, nam est ad Nouium, credo, et alibi* ‘I would say I soothed my throat rather than I gargled, for I think that is in Novius and elsewhere’.

⁹⁵ Freisenbruch 2007: 238.

⁹⁶ Swain 2004: 17.

⁹⁷ Gellius refers to Fronto’s *sermo purus* at 19.8.1.

Graece nescio quid ais te conpegisse, quod ut aequae pauca a te scripta placeat tibi. tunc es qui me nuper concastigabas, quorsum Graece scriberem? mihi uero nunc potissimum Graece scribendum est. 'quamobrem?' rogas. uolo periculum facere, an id, quod non didici, facilius obsecundet mihi, quoniam quidem illud, quod didici, deserit. (VdH 42.9–42.13)

I do not know why you say that you have composed something in Greek which pleases you as much as few other things you have written. Are you not the person who recently castigated me for writing in Greek? Now I think I must write even more in Greek. 'Why?' you ask. I want to risk it to see if something I have not learnt might more easily come to my aid, since what I have learnt deserts me.

This attitude – that Greek can represent a *periculum* – might support Adams' contention that 'it would have been an extreme act for two educated Romans to communicate purely in Greek to express their joint possession of the trappings of that culture'.⁹⁸ But, of course, just as Marcus is teasing by saying he has not learnt Greek, since he had lessons from, no doubt, the very best Greek teachers (*Vita Marci* 2.3–4) and he writes extensively in Greek, we need to be cautious about what Fronto and friends say about their linguistic practice and assess both the theory and the practice carefully in their immediate and broader Roman context.

A key passage for understanding Fronto's views on language, identity and culture comes when Fronto writes a letter in Greek destined for Marcus' mother Domitia Lucilla. Instead of sending it directly to the notionally 'intended' recipient, Fronto sends it via Marcus with a note that he would appreciate it if Marcus would check his Greek first so that he might avoid embarrassing *barbarismi* and looking uncouth.

epistulam matri tuae scripsi, quae mea inprudencia est, Graece, eamque epistulae ad te scriptae implicui. tu prior lege et, si quis inerat barbarismus, tu, qui a graecis litteris recentior es, corrige atque ita matri redde. nolo enim me mater tua ut Opicum contemnat. uale domine et matri saluum da, cum epistulam dabis, quo libentius legat. (VdH 21.12–16)

I've daringly written a letter to your mother in Greek which I have included in the letter which I have written to you. Read it first and, since you've studied

⁹⁸ Adams 2003a: 301.

Greek more recently than me, if you find any howlers in it, correct them and then pass it on to your mother. I do not want your mother despising me as an *Opicus*. Farewell my Lord and give your mother a kiss when you hand her the letter so that she will read it more willingly.

Once again taking this comment at face value is pointless: we know that Fronto's Greek is impeccable (any argument to the contrary can be seen to have been misled by problems with the transmission and edition of the letters).⁹⁹ Instead, this carefully thought-out strategy serves several of Fronto's needs. First, writing in Greek and asking for it to be checked by his student are intended to flatter both the recipient, who had been working on her philhellenic credentials, and the conduit, who is thus raised to a position of superior linguistic authority (Marcus has been trained more recently: *a graecis litteris recentior*). Second, in using Marcus in this way Fronto deliberately fosters the importance of their mutual reliance, shared education and secrets: presumably Domitia Lucilla will not be apprised of the mistakes, so Fronto creates a further private domain for which not even the mother-son relationship is a match. Third, it gives Fronto an opportunity to set out his ethnolinguistic stall. He is arguably the leading Latinist of his day and by making such a fuss about his Greek, getting it checked by Marcus and disingenuously worrying in the letter to Domitia itself that it might be full of mistakes, barbarisms and not Attic enough, he flags up that he is *not* Greek (εἰ τι τῶν ὀνομάτων ἐν ταῖς ἐπιστολαῖς ταύταις εἴη ἄκυρον ἢ βάρβαρον ἢ ἄλλως ἀδόκιμον ἢ μὴ πᾶν Ἀττικόν ... 'if there is anything in this letter which is inept, barbarous, in anyway inappropriate or not entirely Attic' (VdH 24.1–3)). The ability to write a non-native but perfectly Attic letter and the caveats Fronto attaches to it tell us about his attitude towards Greek: it is not one half of the Roman language but the language of the Greeks which Romans should know well. He also, in highlighting the risks of barbarous language and raising the image of the *Opicus*,¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ See VdH 59–60.

¹⁰⁰ '[a] term which is used in second-century authors to signal ignorance of Greek' (Swain 2004: 22, with further discussion at 38–9).

neatly opens the way for comments on his own background as ἑγὼ δὲ Λίβυς τῶν Λιβύων τῶν νομάδων ‘a Libyan of the Libyan nomads’¹⁰¹ (VdH 24.9) and links himself to the erudite Scythian Anacharsis (naturally with regard to his barbarian status rather than his famed wisdom, Fronto disassembles).¹⁰² By focusing the attention of both Marcus and Domitia on his being a native of a land far from Rome, his linguistic skills in writing faultless non-native Attic Greek, whilst being the pre-eminent Latinist of his day, might seem even more impressive. Fronto is perhaps consciously making a display of what he understands as constituting Romanness: having elegant native Latin, *lingua Romana*, and learned Attic Greek, *lingua Graecorum*, no matter where in the Empire you were born.

The meaning of the key linguistic entities *lingua Graecorum* and *lingua Romana* should always be considered with care and carefully translated.¹⁰³ Fronto’s use of *lingua Romana* moves the sociolinguistic perspective from a traditional concept of *utraque lingua*, with its duality of reference, to one which arguably fits better with the new imperial context.¹⁰⁴ Fronto is claiming a perfect version of Latin for the Romans who no longer need to grapple with the *egestas* of the language and the awkwardness of the cultural superiority of the classical (*not* contemporary) Greeks which so preoccupied earlier authors.¹⁰⁵ The Romans have succeeded as *the* superpower of the known world and now have the confidence that their own language can, and should,

¹⁰¹ See Claassen 2009 for Fronto’s relationship with his homeland.

¹⁰² Apuleius does the same (*Apology* 24.6), see Swain 2004: 13. Fronto again mentions his origins at VdH 132.19–20: *deosque patrios ita comprecatus sum: Hammo Iuppiter et Li<byae>* ‘And so I prayed to the ancestral gods: Hammo Juppiter and Libyan’.

¹⁰³ See Valette for this important point, though her view of Fronto’s originality on this score seems overblown (2014: 123). For *lingua Graecorum* and *lingua Romana*, see VdH 225.5; for *Romana lingua*, see VdH 215.10.

¹⁰⁴ For this usage, see also Pliny, *Ep.* 2.10.2, and for further references, Adams 2003b: 194–7. Flobert (1988) argues for a strong link between the use of the term *lingua Romana* and imperial domination.

¹⁰⁵ See Swain 2004 for a discussion of the evolving relationship between Romans and Greek culture; see Goldhill 2001; Swain 1996; Whitmarsh 2001, 2013 for further discussions of the dynamic literary and cultural context. The importance of ‘Attic’ Latin is suggested by Quintilian in his reference to Scipio, Laelius and Cato as *uelut Attici Romanorum* (12.10.39). The view on Atticism is not completely positive, however, note Marcus’ reference to *placensis illos sibi et prouocantis Atticos* ‘those self-satisfied and provocative Atticists’ (VdH 249.11).

reflect this. As part of being culturally Roman, they also need to know Attic language and Greek literature inside out, of course, but this is another culture's language, which they now own and control through a process of *Sprachanschluß*.¹⁰⁶ Fronto seems to have a theoretical view at least that language and culture are very closely aligned, a point of view most clearly expressed when he explains that *philostorgia* cannot be expressed in Latin because this simply is not a Roman thing (VdH 111.16–20; 173.15–16). A similar view might also be expressed in Gellius' report of a conversation between Fronto and an unnamed person at a reading of Claudius Quadrigarius' *Annals* (VdH 261.22–262.18). In response to a listener's criticism about the use of the phrase *multis mortalibus* instead of *hominibus multis* in an historical work, Fronto defends the choice in its context, but states that his commentary should not imply that the former should be used incautiously, otherwise this might have the result of the proverb found in Varro's *Satires*: τὸ ἐπὶ τῇ φακῇ μύρον 'myrrh-oil on lentils'. Van den Hout may be right that the point of this proverb here is that 'certain things do not mix', rather than 'a waste of a good thing', although it might be reasonable to think that, given the choice of myrrh rather than any old oil, that the options are not mutually exclusive.¹⁰⁷ Either way, the point is made more strongly by the code-switch into Greek, and may support the suggestion that Fronto views Greek as a separate entity, different from, and not entwined into *lingua Romana*: the languages themselves do not mix (see Chapter 6). The confident statements on the autonomy of Greek and *lingua Romana* perhaps reflect a different emphasis in approach than is more commonly expressed in the Late Republic, in which efforts must still be made in Latin to enact a full cultural translation.

It was a key aim of intellectuals in the Late Republic, of course, to transfer 'Greek wisdom' to Rome, with Cicero having Crassus state that the men who are successful will be ranked more highly than the Greeks (*De Oratore* 3.95). The

¹⁰⁶ See Swain 2004: 9 for *Sprachanschluß*.

¹⁰⁷ See VdH p. 594. This proverb is also found at CIC. *Att.* 1.19.2; see Chapter 3.

Antonine context is not one of under-confidence and Fronto might be seen as one of these *doctissimi* who effectively claim to have promoted Latin to its rightful position. In a conversation cited by Gellius between Fronto and Favorinus, the latter places Fronto in this group:

tum Fauorinus scientiam rerum uberem uerborumque eius elegantiam exosculatus 'absque te', inquit, 'uno forsitan lingua profecto Graeca longe anteisset, sed tu, mi Fronto, quod in uersu Homérico, est, id facis: καὶ νῦ κεν ἡ παρέλασας ἡ ἀμφίριστον ἔθηκες. (Noctes Att. ii.26.5)

Then Favorinus praised Fronto's rich knowledge and elegance of expression and said 'without you alone perhaps the Greek language would have come in first by a long way, but you, my Fronto, are doing what Homer says: *and now you have overtaken in the race or made it a dead heat*'.

This commentary might be seen as tongue-in-cheek: the Hellenist Favorinus has potentially undermined his point about the success of the Latin language by concluding the statement in Greek, and not any old Greek, but the Greek of 'the poet', arguably the one unsurpassable Greek. If this is a fabricated conversation rather than a transcription of real utterances, we might wonder what Gellius has in mind here, whether a simple dig at Fronto or a cautious comment about the limits of *lingua Romana*.¹⁰⁸ This remark comes at the end of a discussion provoked by Favorinus' view that Greek has more colour terms, in which Fronto has set out the colourful Latin vocabulary. Although he makes an opening placatory statement on the richness of Greek, Fronto's presentation is clearly designed to show that depth of knowledge of literary Latin reveals the wide range of terms available, noting that in some cases this has entailed the annexation of Greek words: *factus Graece noster est* 'this [word, *spadix*] was made in Greece but is now ours' (ii.26.3). Marcus also specifically taps into this Greek–Latin rivalry when he effusively praises Fronto's speech of

¹⁰⁸ In one reconstruction of a letter written to Claudius Iulianus, Fronto complains that Gellius has published material without permission (VdH 182.4–12). It seems likely that the reference may be, if we have the correct readings and identified the right Gellius, to the conversations involving Fronto in the *Attic Nights* (VdH pp. 427–8; more cautiously, Champlin 1974: 152).

thanks to Pius in a letter in 143, and in doing so comments that it betters not only those of one of his favourite Latin authors, Cato, but that it would be easier to better a speech of Demosthenes than Fronto's creation. Marcus completes his gushing with a hyperbolic flourish: *nihil ego umquam cultius, nihil antiquius, nihil conditius, nihil latinus legi* 'I have never read anything more refined, more classical, more polished, more Latin' (VdH 27.9–10), summarizing effectively Fronto's stylistic preferences and ending with a comparative which is rare and not in extant Latin before this point.¹⁰⁹ This is perhaps intended to highlight Fronto's role as pioneering Latinist. In a short letter from 162, Marcus again appears to throw emphasis on Fronto's Latin when he expresses his admiration for one of his friend's letters: *nam de elegantia quid dicam, nisi te Latine loqui, nos ceteros neque Graece neque Latine* 'what then shall I say about its elegance, except that you speak Latin whereas we others speak neither Greek nor Latin'. The full implications of this comment are not known – perhaps Fronto is deliberately not heralded as someone *doctus utraque lingua*, although he undoubtedly was.

Fronto's correspondence encourages us to consider that Romanness, for at least some of the elite in the Antonine period, entails knowledge of the separate entities Attic Greek and a perfect Latin, that is, *lingua Romana*. This may signal a shift if we consider that in the Late Republic *lingua Romana* more commonly involves the duality of a single mixed entity combining *utraque lingua*. Swain talks about the use of Greek in Cicero's Latin as being 'unmarked', but refers to Apuleius' choice to write in Greek as 'a marked choice: a very clear expression of a Roman's ability to control Greek'.¹¹⁰ We could suggest an alternative view: the use of Greek in these different contexts may both be unmarked. As the confidence with which Romans use Greek in clear domains such as literature, rhetoric, grammar, love, medicine and philosophy

¹⁰⁹ Only the example in Marcus' letter appears in the *OLD*. *Latinus* is not treated in the *TLL*.

¹¹⁰ Swain 2004: 18.

grows, its appearance in these contexts might in fact represent the unmarked choice in some elite circles in the second century. Any discussion of the use of Greek from the first century BC to the second century AD must be cognizant of the possible shifts in attitudes and practice over this time as illustrated in [Chapters 3 to 5](#). However, it may be unwise to attempt to reconstruct these shifts in even the most general terms. As we have seen, the expressed attitudes and practices of individuals do not necessarily align and different perspectives on language and culture remained live, making the Greek in Latin texts a particularly versatile agent. Therefore the helpfulness of the concept of markedness may be called into question when it is used to refer in general terms to overall trends of the elite (see also [Chapter 3](#)). Markedness only works for the complexities of the Roman linguistic universe if it is taken to be contextually specific and flexible, mirroring the constant linguistic gymnastics undertaken by Fronto and friends, and their earlier epistolary forebears.

CHAPTER 5

THE LANGUAGE OF LETTERS AND BEYOND: GREEK IN SUETONIUS' BIOGRAPHIES

The Greek in Suetonius is a vivid, multifaceted and at present under-exploited resource and one that helpfully extends the parameters of this volume.¹ In terms of chronology and thematic content, the Suetonian corpus sits squarely with the others we consider, but the dimensions of its code-switching are unique. Alongside evidence for code-switching in Augustus' letters to political and literary figures such as Tiberius, Livia and Virgil, Suetonius also provides examples of code-switching in a series of other categories and contexts, including in his authorial voice. All these instances are set against the backdrop of Suetonius' own hyper-awareness of, and commentary on, linguistic and cultural attitudes.

The existence of these different types of evidence for bilingual practices and attitudes, marshalled within the same text by the same author, offers the opportunity to consider the nature of epistolary code-switching in relation to that of other types and genres. Broader frames of comparison for the epistolary code-switching of the other authors in this volume are either non-existent or external to the epistolary texts. Aside from a few passages of Aulus Gellius recording fragments of Fronto's conversations (see [Chapter 4](#)), the surviving evidence for the code-switching of Fronto is restricted to his letters. A broader reconstruction of Cicero's attitudes and practices of Greek requires us to look across numerous types of text, each with different aims and constraints. Within Suetonius' text, however, it is possible both to consider the

¹ See also Elder [2018](#).

category of letters in isolation and, simultaneously, to look outwards from it to the discourses in and about Greek language and culture that shape the practice of epistolary code-switching.

In addition to considering the epistolary code-switching within the Suetonian corpus in detail, in ways familiar from across this volume, this chapter also functions as a response to, and commentary on, our analysis of the bilingual practice of the other authors. A comparison across the different contexts and layers of Greek within Suetonius' work illuminates several themes at the heart of this volume. The first of these is the nature of letters as a category: we can interrogate the distinctiveness of epistolary code-switching and its relationship to the purpose and genre of letters. A comparison between the oral and written code-switching that Suetonius cites is particularly helpful here: the distinction between these two types of code-switching, and its relevance to understanding the nature of epistolary code-switching, has been addressed throughout this volume (especially in [Chapter 2](#)) and the Suetonian evidence sheds further light on it. The range of attitudes to and functions of Greek also makes it possible to evaluate the position of Greek both within and beyond the epistolary context. The broad time-frame of the text's setting and composition allows insights into the changing cultural dynamic between Latin and Greek.² Uniquely amongst the corpora considered in this volume, the text both demonstrates the use of Greek amongst the emperors and their immediate circles, and reveals a wider engagement with Greek beyond named elite actors, including its deployment in an at times critical commentary about the emperor. It is therefore possible to consider the distinction between 'popular' and 'elite' usage, and the role that language played in constructions and expectations of the emperor.

Although several of the themes considered in this chapter have been addressed in varying degrees of detail in previous

² See Dubuisson [2009](#) on the changes in language attitudes between the setting and composition of Suetonius' text, and their effect on how we read it.

scholarship, they have largely been looked at in isolation.³ There has been no systematic analysis of the code-switching in the Suetonian corpus, and the different types of Greek practice and commentary within it have not been clearly articulated.⁴ Within this chapter, the evidence for Greek is broadly divided into the following groups: (1) Suetonius' commentary on bilingualism, language practices and cultural attitudes; (2) his use of Greek in the authorial voice; (3) his quotation of oral code-switches of various people and groups, most frequently the emperors themselves, and of popular verses or rumours; and (4) his citation of written code-switching, including epistolary code-switching. We evaluate each of these before considering how they overlap in our reading of Augustus' letters. Together, the different layers of bilingual practice and commentary highlight the diversity of voices and attitudes present in Suetonius' Greek. They cast light on the varied ways that the language was used to accentuate and shape Roman discourse of the imperial period within and beyond letters.

Two anecdotes about the emperor Tiberius highlight the critical interest in the limitations and expectations of Roman language, together with the use of Greek within it, that run through Suetonius' text.⁵ This commentary constructs the

³ On Suetonius' use and sources of Greek in the *Lives* and beyond, see Dubuisson 2009; Jocelyn 1999: 191; Rochette 2015; Wardle 1992, 1993; on the relationship between emperors and Greek in the *Lives*, see Best 1976; Dubuisson 2009; Rochette 2015 and, with a focus on literary Greek, Berthet 1978 and Horváth 1996; on Augustus' use and knowledge of Greek, see Adams 2003a: 11; Bowersock 1965; Dubuisson 2002; Gelsomino 1958, 1959; Rochette 2015; for some discussion and close reading of Greek within the letters, see Adams 2003a: 331–3, 416, 420; Birch 1981; Dubuisson 2002; Gelsomino 1959. Wallace-Hadrill 1983 provides an account of Suetonius' life and scholarly interests, and includes discussion of the emperors' relationship to language and culture (175–97) and the place of Augustus' letters in the *Lives* (91–6). Bourne 1918 provides an early overview of Augustus' letters, their themes and style.

⁴ There is some recognition of the different layers and types of Greek, and the ways in which these interact, in Dubuisson 2009 and Horváth 1996, but these are not systematically articulated or reviewed. Rochette 2015 provides a useful compilation and analysis of the evidence for the use of Greek by each of the Julio-Claudian emperors, but he is concerned mainly with assessing the quality and extent of their bilingualism.

⁵ These passages, and what they reveal about Tiberius' linguistic attitudes, are also discussed in Dubuisson 1986 and Kaimio 1979: 106, 132–3.

backdrop against which to read instances of Greek code-switching within letters and other sources in the text. The Tiberian passages show a contemporary engagement with a number of important themes and debates about language raised across this volume as a whole: the variation in attitudes to the use of the Greek between different authors and contexts; the range of bilingual strategies available, and within these the complex ‘stratigraphy’ of code-switching and borrowing;⁶ the contested locus of authority for appropriate language.

sermone Graeco quamquam alioqui promptus et facilis, non tamen usque quaque usus est abstinuitque maxime in senatu; adeo quidem, ut monopolium nominaturus ueniam prius postularet quod sibi uerbo peregrino utendum esset. atque etiam cum in quodam decreto patrum ἐμβλημα recitaretur, commutandam censuit uocem et pro peregrina nostratrem requirendam aut, si non reperiretur, uel pluribus et per ambitum uerborum rem enuntiandam. (Tib. 71)

Though in general he spoke Greek readily and fluently, yet he would not use it on all occasions, and especially eschewed it in the Senate; so much so that before using the word *monopolium*, he begged pardon for the necessity of employing a foreign term. Again, when the term *emblema* was read in a decree of the Senate, he recommended that it be changed and a native word substituted for the foreign one; and if one could not be found, that the idea be expressed by several words, if necessary, and by periphrasis. (trans. Rolfe, adapted)⁷

hic idem cum ex oratione Tiberi uerbum reprehendisset, adfirmante Ateio Capitone, et esse illud Latinum, et si non esset futurum certe iam inde, ‘mentitur’, inquit, ‘Capito; tu enim, Caesar, ciuitatem dare potes hominibus, uerbis non potes’. (Gram. et rhet. 22)

When this same [Porcellus] had criticised a word in one of Tiberius’ speeches, and Ateius Capito declared that it was good Latin, or if not, that it would surely be from that time on, Porcellus answered: ‘Capito lies; for you, Caesar, can confer citizenship upon men, but not upon a word.’

In the first passage, from the *Life of Tiberius*, we see a Tiberius who, although perfectly competent in Greek in general (the *alioqui* is telling), recognizes that there are contexts, above all

⁶ I am grateful to Andrew Wallace-Hadrill for suggesting this term.

⁷ All translations of Suetonius are taken from the revised Loeb edition of J. C. Rolfe unless otherwise indicated (Rolfe 1998a and 1998b). Quotations from *Lives of the Caesars* and *Lives of the Grammarians and Rhetoricians* are taken from Kaster’s OCT (Kaster 2016a). Quotations from other works of Suetonius are from Rolfe 1998b.

the Senate,⁸ in which the language is inappropriate and in which he prefers to stick to his native Latin. He therefore recommends the substitution of Greek terms by Latin words or phrases. The second passage, taken from the *Lives of the Grammarians*, concerns the question of linguistic authority: two grammarians, Porcellus (described by Suetonius as ‘the harshest critic of the Latin language’) and Ateius Capito, debate the status of particular words in relation to Latin and the authority of the emperor to determine this.⁹

The various linguistic strategies deployed in the passages demonstrate a contemporary awareness of the subtle distinctions between different bilingual phenomena and the ways in which these could function as a sensitive barometer of individual language attitudes. Although our focus is on code-switches, throughout this volume we have repeatedly stressed the difficulties of distinguishing between code-switches and borrowings. We have acknowledged that the categorization of a word as a code-switch or a borrowing remains highly subjective, particularly since a word’s position on the continuum between the two varies across authors, time periods and types of text. The passage from the *Life of Tiberius* demonstrates the flexibility of this continuum and its meaningfulness. The word for which Tiberius apologizes, *monopolium*, is not instantly recognizable as Greek. Its morphological form is significant here: it is cited with an integrated Latin accusative ending rather than with the Greek accusative ending *monopolion*. It is only once we are told that Tiberius apologized for using a foreign term (*uerbo peregrino*) that its foreignness is highlighted. The fact that Tiberius felt the need to apologize for even an integrated borrowing indicates his own linguistic sensitivity and desire to retain strict Latinity. His assessment of the word

⁸ On the restrictions and expectations of language use in the Senate, see Kaimio 1979: 103–10. The fact that in a passage of Tacitus (*Ann.* 3.65.3; discussed further below, p. 258), Tiberius can switch into Greek just as he leaves the Senate perhaps highlights the contrast between language use inside and outside the Senate.

⁹ Suet. *Gram.* 22: *M. Pomponius Porcellus, sermonis Latini exactor molestissimus*. On the problem of this grammarian’s name, see Kaster 1992: 99–102. The manuscripts of Suetonius give Marcellus but Porcellus is supported by Dio and Seneca. Kaster takes Marcellus as a mistake either by Suetonius or in the transmission process.

seems to contrast with Suetonius', even in a parallel context: in describing a meeting of the Senate, Suetonius uses the word *monopoliis* with a Latin ablative ending and without comment:

neque tam paruum quicquam neque tam magnum publici priuatique negotii fuit de quo non ad patres conscriptos referretur: de uectigalibus ac monopoliis, de extruendis reficiendisue operibus. (Tib. 30)

For there was no matter of public or private business so small or so great that [Tiberius] did not lay it before the senators, consulting them about revenues and monopolies, constructing and restoring public buildings.

The word *ἐμπλημα* is similarly revealing. In the first passage above, it appears in Greek script, marking it out as obviously Greek.¹⁰ It has no direct Latin equivalent: Tiberius would indeed have searched in vain for one of 'our' words. It had, however, previously been integrated as a borrowing. Cicero uses the word with Latin inflection a number of times without comment, in contrast to Tiberius' preference for periphrasis.¹¹ The word was later employed by Pliny the Elder and Quintilian, and would probably have been recognizable to Suetonius' readership.¹² The difference between this and Tiberius' treatment of the word provides further support for Suetonius' construction of Tiberius' strict attitudes towards the use of Greek.¹³

The passages also raise the question of where authority over linguistic practices and judgements should lie. Within and across the passages, there are divergences of opinion on this question, and specifically about the emperors' capacity to decide it. Whilst Tiberius sets the linguistic strategy for the Senate to follow in the passage from the *Life of Tiberius*, in

¹⁰ The issue of manuscript variation is one that has been raised throughout this volume and will be discussed in relation to Suetonius below, pp. 232–4. Here, the manuscripts are consistent in recording *ἐμπλημα* in Greek characters.

¹¹ *Cic. Verr.* 11.4.54 (*emblematum*); *Ver.* 11.4.37 (*emblematis*); *Brut.* 274 (*emblemate*).

¹² On the popularization of *emblemata* by Pliny and Quintilian, see Dubuisson 2009: 33.

¹³ Dubuisson 2009: 33–4 argues that Tiberius' avoidance of *emblemata* here would, to an audience of AD 120–130, have made him seem boorish and out of touch. It is worth noting that Suetonius' portrayal of Tiberius' linguistic strictness here must be placed in the context of other evidence stressing his Greek knowledge and education, and grammatical interests: on this, see Dubuisson 1986: 113–14 and Rochette 2015: 161 and 163–4. At *Tac. Ann.* 3.55, 4.52 and 6.20, Tiberius is described as switching into Greek to make his point. See also the evidence from Suetonius of Augustus code-switching in letters to Tiberius, discussed in detail below, pp. 257–64.

the passage from the *Lives of the Grammarians*, his power over the boundaries of the Latin language is challenged. Instead, it is the grammarians who possess linguistic authority, a group who, as Kaster demonstrates, gained increasing prominence as ‘guardians of language’ over time.¹⁴ Between them, the passages demonstrate that linguistic standards, and authority over them, were not absolute and there was a genuine debate to be had.

The parameters of this debate are both philological and political. The terms in which it is framed tie it directly to the negotiation and understandings of proper ‘Roman’ discourse. The composition of this ‘Roman’ discourse and the place of Greek within it have been debated throughout this volume.¹⁵ In the *Lives of the Grammarians*, the integration and adoption of a Greek word are described via the metaphor of giving it citizenship, that is in terms of one of the most recognizable markers of Romanness. In doing so, it ties together political and linguistic ways of belonging. As we have seen (Chapter 4), the link between language and citizenship is not confined to Suetonius and occurs elsewhere in Roman literature: Seneca, Quintilian and Aulus Gellius (quoting Apollinaris) make use of the same metaphor.¹⁶ One of the Seneca passages and the Aulus Gellius passage are especially relevant to the debate about the extent of grammarians’ linguistic authority played out in the Tiberius passage:¹⁷

hoc uerbum [analogia] cum Latini grammatici ciuitate donauerint, ego damnandum non puto, puto in ciuitatem suam redigendum. utar ergo illo non tantum tamquam recepto, sed tamquam usitato. (SEN. *Ep.* 120.4)

Since this word ‘analogy’ has been given citizenship by Latin grammarians, I do not think that it ought to be condemned, but I do think it should be brought back into its citizenship. I shall, therefore, make use of the word, not merely as accepted, but as established.

¹⁴ Kaster 1988. On Suetonius’ own role as a *grammaticus*, and the effect of this on his writing and attitudes, see Wallace-Hadrill 1983, especially 30–49.

¹⁵ On the place of Greek in ‘Roman’ discourse and the way that it changes over time, see Chapter 4 and Swain 2004.

¹⁶ SEN. *Q. Nat.* v.16.4; SEN. *Ep.* 120.4; Quintilian *Inst.* 8.1.2–3; SUET. *Gram. et rhet.* 22; GEL. *Noctes Att.* xix.8.1.

¹⁷ For these two examples, see also Mullen 2015.

The Language of Letters and Beyond

fuisset autem uerbum hoc a te ciuitate donatum aut in Latinam coloniam deductum, si tu eo uti dignatus fores. (GEL. xix.13.3)

This word [*nan*] would at once have been granted citizenship by you or been introduced into a Latin colony if you [Fronto] had deigned to use it.

The relationship between language and citizenship, and the process by which citizenship is granted, is construed slightly differently across the three passages. The passages by Seneca and Aulus Gellius recognize the possibility that a grammarian or linguistic authority such as Fronto can give citizenship to a word and therefore acknowledge the inherent flexibility of the bounds of Roman language. The gradations highlighted by Aulus Gellius show an explicit awareness of the spectrum between a completely foreign word and full linguistic integration that is played upon in *Tiberius* 71: even if it does not obtain full citizenship, the word may ‘be introduced into a Latin colony’. This second metaphor is not explained, but presumably denotes a form of linguistic integration less secure than a citizenship grant. In the passage from Suetonius’ *Lives of the Grammarians*, however, there is none of this flexibility, and the possibility of granting citizenship to a word is denied even to the emperor.

The critical relationship between the emperor and language is explained explicitly in a passage of Fronto, and this passage in turn sheds light on Suetonius’ own concern with emperors’ language. Fronto argues that the emperor’s speech is a material part of his *imperium*:

imperium autem non potestatis tantummodo uocabulum sed etiam orationis est: quippe uis imperandi iubendo uetandoque exercetur. (VdH 123.16–18)

But *imperium* is a term not only of power but also of speech; for the strength of ruling is exercised by ordering and by forbidding.

The emperor’s ability in speaking is therefore of crucial importance. Fronto tracks the eloquence of Roman rulers, arguing for a decline from Julius Caesar onwards:

postquam res p(ublica) a magistratibus annuis ad C. Caesarem et mox ad Augustum tralata est, Caesari quidem facultatem dicendi uideo | imperatoriam fuisse, Augustum uero saeculi residua elegantia et Latinae linguae etiamtum integro lepore potius quam dicendi ubertate praeditum puto, post Augustum

The Language of Letters and Beyond

nonnihil reliquiarum iam et uietarum et tabescentium Tiberio illi superfuisse, imperatores autem deinceps ad Vespasianum usque eiusmodi omnes, ut non minus uerborum puderet, quam pigeret morum et misereret facinorum ... m² in margine; ueteris eloquentiae colorem adumbratum ostendit Hadriana oratio>. (VdH 123.3–10; 124.19)

When the Republic had been transferred from yearly magistrates to C. Caesar and on to Augustus, I perceive, indeed, that Caesar's gift of speech was that of an emperor, while Augustus was, I think, master of but the dying elegance of his times and such charm as the Latin tongue still retained unimpaired, rather than of opulent diction. After Augustus a few relics only, withered already and decaying, were left over for the notorious Tiberius. But his successors without a break to Vespasian were all of such a kind as to make us no less ashamed of their speaking than disgusted with their characters and sorry for their acts ... Hadrian's speech affects a spurious pretence of ancient eloquence. (trans. Haines)

This passage echoes some of Suetonius' own assessments of the emperors' language: he too praises Caesar's elegance and, like Fronto, ties it to his skill as a military leader:

eloquentia militarique re aut aequauit praestantissimorum gloriam aut excessit. (Jul. 55)

Caesar either equalled or excelled the glory of the most outstanding men in eloquence and in military affairs.

According to Fronto, Tiberius must make do with the dregs of the Augustan age: this perception of decline may help to make further sense of the strictness with which Tiberius attempts to preserve the Latin language in Suetonius' account.¹⁸ The relative assessment of Augustus and Hadrian is also striking here. Neither can compete with Caesar in eloquence: Hadrian only displays the *colorem adumbratum* 'spurious pretence' of ancient eloquence, whilst Augustus is described as having been endowed with the residual elegance of his time rather than with a particular gift of speaking. It is unclear whether the entirety of this assessment of the two emperors' skill can be

¹⁸ A similar concern about decline may be seen in V. MAX. 2.2.2; it is often argued that this passage, written in the Tiberian age, retrojects a contemporary concern about linguistic purity onto the Republic; see, for example, Rochette 2015: 164 and Wallace-Hadrill 2008: 60. Dubuisson 1982, however, takes the passage at face value. Dubuisson 2009: 33 argues that a concern about the use of Greek was common in the Tiberian age, and not just restricted to Tiberius.

assigned directly to Fronto, since the comment about Hadrian has been added to the margin in a second hand. Nonetheless, this passage is worth bearing in mind in the context of Hadrian's own attempts to present Augustus as 'uneducated' and the ways in which Suetonius responds to this in his approach to Augustus' language in the *Lives*.¹⁹

Fronto criticizes the speech of the emperors from Tiberius to Vespasian together with their actions. Suetonius occasionally makes the link between the quality of emperors and the quality of their language equally explicit. For example, he describes how the magnitude of Caligula's crimes is 'increased' by the 'brutality' of his language: *immanissima facta augebat atrocitate uerborum* (*Cal.* 29.1). This link, visible both in Fronto and in Suetonius, helps to explain how language can, implicitly, be used as a marker of the emperors' characters within the *Lives* and why Suetonius includes anecdotes and summaries of each emperor's linguistic practices.²⁰ The philological and linguistic concerns of the *Lives* are tied to a broader discourse of the importance of language, and specifically the emperor's language, in the Roman state and its *imperium*.

These passages about the emperor Tiberius thus demonstrate how questions about language choices and attitudes raised across this volume are framed in a contemporary context and the wider politics at stake within them. Instances of code-switching in the Suetonian corpus can be read against this framework, sometimes directly: for example, the letters cited by Suetonius include some to Tiberius, enabling us to see how language practices in letters compare with those expressed here. First, however, some contextualizing of the corpus and a discussion of how our methodology applies to it are necessary.

¹⁹ On Hadrian's attitude to Augustus' language and Suetonius' response to this, see Wardle 2014: 489. Cf. Wallace-Hadrill 1983: 141 and 199–200, who highlights some of the ways that Augustus was a model for Hadrian, and Suetonius' acknowledgement of this: for example at *Aug.* 7.1, Suetonius presents Hadrian with a bust of Augustus.

²⁰ Dubuisson 2009 and Rochette 2015 discuss the ways in which the emperors' use of Greek adds to Suetonius' characterization of them.

The Corpus and Its Historical Context

This chapter considers code-switching within all the extant Latin works of Suetonius, that is, *De vita Caesarum* and parts of *De uiris illustribus*. Extant portions of this latter work include *De grammaticis*, *De rhetoribus*, *De poetis* (of which the life of Virgil and fragments of the lives of Terence, Horace, Lucan, Persius and Tibullus survive), *De historicis* (of which a brief life of Pliny the Elder survives), and *De oratoribus* (of which a brief life of Passienus Crispus survives).²¹ Suetonius uses Greek sources throughout his works and quotes ‘intelligently and accurately’ from Greek in most of them.²² Although we do not consider them here, it is also worth bearing in mind that Suetonius probably produced at least some writings entirely in Greek, underlining his capacity for the language.²³ An understanding of Suetonius’ biography and career, and of the historical context in which he wrote, is essential for several of the questions addressed.

Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus was a Roman *eques* who was born *c.* AD 69 and died some time after AD 122.²⁴ He occupied a series of important posts at the imperial court under Trajan and Hadrian, including the offices *a studiis*, *a bibliothecis*, and *ab epistulis*: all these posts made use of his scholarly, linguistic and literary skills and interests.²⁵ The impact of Suetonius’ public offices on his treatment of, and access to, Augustus’ letters

²¹ We know of several other lost works of Suetonius: Wallace-Hadrill 1983: 43 n. 22 provides a useful summary.

²² Wardle 1993: 91. On the usage and identity of Suetonius’ Greek sources, see Townend 1960 and, in opposition to Townend’s conclusions on the identity of these sources, Wardle 1992.

²³ Hutchinson 2013: 142. One of Suetonius’ Greek works *Περὶ βλασφημιῶν* (‘On Insults’) is partially extant: on this work, see Taillardat 1967. On the debate over Suetonius’ Greek writing(s), see Wardle 1993. In contrast to the weight of earlier scholarship, he plays down Suetonius’ writings in Greek.

²⁴ Wardle 2014: 1–6 provides a useful overview of Suetonius’ biography and the state of scholarship on it. See also Wallace-Hadrill 1983: 2–8 for a summary of Suetonius’ biographical details and the sources for them. These sources are both literary and epigraphic: his public career was documented in an honorific inscription from Hippo in North Africa. For details of this inscription and its publication, see Wallace-Hadrill 1983: 5 n. 8.

²⁵ On the connection between Suetonius’ posts and his scholarly and literary interests, see Wallace-Hadrill 1983: 7.

is discussed below (p. 247). Reconstruction of the composition and publication of Suetonius' works relative to his different positions is, however, complicated.²⁶ There is particular debate about the impact on Suetonius' writings, in terms of both his access to sources and his attitude to the emperors, of Hadrian's dismissal of Suetonius from office around AD 122.²⁷ The significance of this dismissal partly depends on whether the *Lives of the Caesars* were written and/or published before or after this point, which remains an open question.²⁸

Chronologically, Suetonius therefore straddles the shift in attitudes to Greek that Swain identifies: Suetonius both looks back to the Late Republic, when Greek, although an integral part of Roman cultural discourse and identity, held an ambiguous position in public life, and forward to the so-called Second Sophistic and the flourishing of Greek culture and literature at Rome, a movement embraced at Hadrian's court.²⁹ It could be argued that we see evidence of this shift in the differences in attitudes towards Greek words between the second-century audience and the characters in the biographies that Dubuisson identifies.³⁰ As Swain illustrates, however, the development is part of a continuum not a break;³¹ different attitudes to Greek were always in play simultaneously, and it is this, rather than necessarily a stark chronological distinction,

²⁶ Wardle 2014: 3.

²⁷ SHA *Hadr.* 11.3: Hadrian is alleged to have dismissed Suetonius, together with the praetorian prefect Septicius Clarus and 'many others', because of their overly 'informal' behaviour towards the emperor's wife Sabina. See Wallace-Hadrill 1983: 6.

²⁸ Townend 1959 argues that some of the *Lives* were published following Suetonius' dismissal and that this is reflected in the decreased use of archival material in the later *Lives* and the 'decline in discretion' in his treatment of contemporary issues (293). Wallace-Hadrill 1983 also supports a late date for the writing and publication of the *Caesars*, with some published in AD 119–122 and some possibly after his dismissal. Power 2010, however, argues that Suetonius was working on the *Caesars* much earlier and that they were possibly published before AD 122. He does not see any sign that they suffered from a loss of access to documentary evidence. Wardle 2014: 4–6 argues that there is no conclusive evidence for dating the *Caesars* either way.

²⁹ On this shift, and Suetonius' place within it, see the excellent discussion in Swain 2004.

³⁰ Dubuisson 2009; see also Rochette 2015.

³¹ Swain 2004: 11.

that gives effect to the code-switching within Suetonius' text. Our discussion of the functions of Greek in Suetonius shows that attitudes and practices were calibrated by a combination of author, genre, context and register and broader shifts over time can be difficult to recover given the multiple factors in play. These shifts are perhaps easier to detect in the comparison between the Ciceronian and Frontonian correspondence, as the analysis in [Chapter 4](#), which discussed the changing place of Greek in relation to *lingua Romana*, attempted to describe.

Treating the Suetonian Corpus

Throughout this volume, the vagaries of the manuscript tradition and the ways in which they complicate the identification of script choices and code-switches have been highlighted. The 200 extant manuscripts of Suetonius' *De vita Caesarum* all derived from a single late eighth- or early ninth-century manuscript, which is now lost.³² According to Rolfe, this manuscript seems to have been largely free of interpolation, although contained a number of errors and minor lacunae; Kaster is more negative about the quality of this archetype, stating that it was 'marred by many gross defects'.³³ The reconstruction of the subsequent transmission process, and of the relationship between the different manuscripts, is complicated.³⁴ Relative consensus on the printed text has nonetheless been achieved, apart from a few sections where textual difficulties remain.³⁵ Kaster opines that the manuscripts are 'generally reliable about representing Greek characters as such, even if they often botch

³² The oldest extant manuscript of Suetonius is Paris.lat.6115 (from Tours), see Reynolds and Wilson 2013: 101; Kaster 2016b: 3.

³³ Rolfe 1914a: xxi; Kaster 2016b: 3.

³⁴ For a detailed discussion of the transmission process and the relationship between the manuscripts of Suetonius, see especially Kaster 2016b: 3–45, who constructs a new stemma. Kaster 2014 and Reynolds 1983: 399–404 on *De vita Caesarum* and 404–5 on *De grammaticis et rhetoribus* are other recent discussions of the transmission process. Bradley provides a useful summary of Rolfe's use of the sigla in his introduction to the revised edition of Rolfe's Loeb translation (1998a and 1998b).

³⁵ The standard critical editions of Suetonius are those by Roth 1858 and Ihm 1907. Preud'homme 1902–1904 is also based on independent study of the manuscripts. The most recent critical edition of *De vita Caesarum* and *De grammaticis et rhetoribus* is Kaster 2016a. Kaster 2016b, appendix 5 (295–9) gives a list of all the

them badly'.³⁶ In his discussion of Augustus' correspondence at *Tiberius* 21.4–7, Birch draws attention to a series of textual issues associated with the transmission of Latin and Greek in particular.³⁷

That script choices are not just the abstract and technical problems of the modern textual critic is highlighted in the passage from the *Life of Tiberius* discussed above, which provide a case study for how script choices affect the language attitudes and practices we read into the text. On the one hand, script choices here matter as to how we perceive the different words at issue, and the extent of their integration into Latin. ἐμβλημα appears in every manuscript in Greek letters, and this script reinforces our understanding of its foreignness to Tiberius, particularly given the contrast with script choices for this word elsewhere.³⁸ On the other hand, *monopolium* appears fully integrated and in Latin script but is nonetheless regarded as unacceptably foreign. Again, this throws the strictness of Tiberius' language attitudes presented in the text into sharper relief. At the same time, it is vital to remember that the script choices in the manuscripts may be divorced from Suetonius' own. This fact illustrates the other side of the argument about the extent to which script choices matter: it demonstrates that bilingual cognition is script-blind, necessarily so in an oral context such as that reported here.

In our cataloguing of code-switches in Suetonius, we have therefore attempted both to remain alert to script choices, and what they can add to our understanding of the text, and to look beyond them, not being guided by script alone in our identification of code-switches. Of the 139 code-switches under consideration, 72 are printed in Greek script in Kaster's

places where his text differs from Ihm's. Kaster 1992 presents prolegomena to Kaster 1995, his earlier edition of *De grammaticis et rhetoribus*.

³⁶ Kaster 2016b: 178. On the transmission of Greek in the manuscripts of Suetonius, see now Rollo 2019. He discusses textual problems of some of the passages discussed here, notably *Tib.* 21.4 and *Dom.* 13.2.

³⁷ Birch 1981: 156. There is further discussion of the textual difficulties of this passage, and *De vita Caesarum* more broadly, in Kaster 2016b, which is a commentary on his OCT edition of the text. For discussion of this passage, see below pp. 260–4.

³⁸ See n. 10 p. 225 above.

text. Although it is not a perfect guide ([Chapter 1](#)),³⁹ flagging of code-switches within Suetonius' text does largely seem to be an indicator of the perception of the extent of a word's integration and of the language in which a speaker or author believed themselves to be communicating.⁴⁰ Given the extent to which the flagging of Greek could be a matter of individual linguistic preference (as the anecdote about Tiberius' flagging of the term *monopolium* discussed above demonstrates), it is important to draw out carefully to whom the code-switches are attributed and by whom they are flagged. In Suetonius' text, in which the linguistic judgements of different individuals and groups are often at play, this is especially important. In general, we have counted as code-switches those Greek words that appear rarely or not at all in Latin before Suetonius, as well as those such as *monopolium* that are explicitly flagged as Greek, whilst those words that appear regularly are not included; this means that words such as *gymnasium* and *orchestra* are not counted as code-switches since they have a long history in Latin texts prior to Suetonius.⁴¹ In the case of Augustus' Greek, we were able to cross-check decisions against Gelsomino's catalogue and commentary of the emperor's Greek and Graecisms.⁴²

The ability to make comparisons across the different types and sources of Greek is crucial to an understanding of whether code-switching in letters forms a distinct practice and hence to the interrogation of letters as a meaningful category, which are two of our central reasons for including Suetonius

³⁹ Pelttari 2011: 467.

⁴⁰ In general, flagging also aligns with script in the text: ten of the twelve code-switches flagged explicitly as Greek within Suetonius' text are in Greek script in Kaster 2016a. The exceptions are *monopolium* at *Tib.* 71 (discussed above, pp. 224–5) and *agona* at *Ner.* 45.2 (discussed below, p. 243): in both these cases, the distinction between the flagging as Greek and its Latin script within Suetonius' text may arguably be significant. Note that this flagging of code-switches is a separate issue from the reporting of quotations: Kaster notes that quotations labelled *Graece* can be given in either Latin or Greek. This recalls the example of Cicero translating a Greek quotation into Latin in a letter to Paetus (*Fam.* ix.26.2; discussed Chapter 1 p. 30, Chapter 5 p. 151), and shows the need to think bilingually even when Greek is not explicitly present.

⁴¹ These examples all appear in a passage describing Nero's cultural innovations, *Nero* 12.

⁴² Gelsomino 1959.

in this volume on epistolary language. It has been necessary to create two sets of evidence: one contains the code-switching from across the Suetonian corpus and the other from letters alone. The data from the letters take exactly the same form as that from the other epistolary collections in this volume (see [Chapter 1](#)). The categorization of the data for code-switching across the broader corpus is more complex and requires some additional explanation.

Many of the code-switches within the Suetonian corpus are not employed by Suetonius himself and fulfil different functions within Suetonius' text than in their original contexts. The categorization of the data is designed to draw these distinctions out. In the database, the 'Author' of the switch is the person described as having employed the switch. If the switch occurs within a passage of narration the author is recorded as Suetonius himself. The 'Source' of the switch records the place from which Suetonius describes the switch as having originally come, that is, a letter, a literary work, an oral comment, etc. In cases where the code-switch is employed in Suetonius' authorial voice, the source of the switch is recorded as 'Narration'. In all cases other than switches originally made in Suetonius' own authorial voice, the 'Source' also effectively signifies the primary function of the code-switch within Suetonius' text, namely, quotation. The column 'Function of switch' then records the most salient function of the switch within its original context.

Below is an example of the way in which this process of categorization works in the case of the letters cited within Suetonius' text. It illustrates the distinction between the function of the code-switch in its original context and its place within Suetonius' text:

iucundissime et ita sim felix, uir fortissime et dux νομιμώτατε, uale. (Tib. 21.4)

Fare thee well, most charming and valiant of men and most conscientious of generals, or may I never know happiness.

The 'Author' of this switch is recorded as Augustus. The 'Source' of the switch is given as 'Quotation: letter': this is also its most

immediate function in Suetonius' text. The 'Function' of the switch is given as 'Description': in the original context of the letter, the switch was primarily deployed to describe Tiberius.

These methods of categorization enable us to isolate the different layers of language within Suetonius' text and consider how they interact to shape the higher-level functions that we do not capture in the database. As will be seen in our analysis of the letters, how a code-switch is framed within Suetonius' oeuvre can change its higher-level functions from its original context.

Functional Categories of Greek in Suetonius

Comparison with the other corpora in this volume demonstrates the level of creativity and variety of Suetonius' Greek. After Cicero, the Suetonian corpus contains the highest number of functional categories of all four corpora in this volume (for a full list of functions in Suetonius' Greek, see [Table 29](#) (Appendix)). In our analysis, there are sixteen different categories of code-switch in Cicero, twelve in Suetonius, nine in Fronto and eight in Pliny.⁴³ These numbers are particularly striking given the relative size of the different corpora. The 142 code-switches in Pliny and the 141 code-switches in Fronto are both datasets of comparable size to the 139 switches in Suetonius. There are, however, 50 per cent more functions of code-switches in Suetonius than in Pliny. Cicero's letters contain around ten times as many code-switches as the Suetonian corpus, but the number of categories is not proportionally greater. The only categories that appear in Cicero but not in Suetonius are: 'Code', 'Commentary', 'Description: self-description', 'Discourse Marker' and 'Greeting'. It is notable that of the more creative uses of Greek requiring rapid bilingual engagement of reader and writer to understand the play between the two languages, only 'Code' is absent in Suetonius. There are, moreover, a number of categories that are unique to Suetonius ('Insult/Mockery', 'Omen/Prophecy', 'Quotation: inscription', 'Quotation: mock literary',

⁴³ Note that the totals here do not include the subcategories of 'GCS', 'Naming' and 'Quotation'.

‘Quotation: popular verse’; for these functions, see [Chapter 1](#)), some of which are revealing of the nature of the genre that Suetonius is writing and the way that this compares to the epistolary genre.⁴⁴

The proportional distribution of the functional categories in Suetonius further highlights the range of his Greek (see [Table 29](#) in comparison with [Tables 22–8](#) (Appendix) showing the functions across the other corpora). Nearly half of the code-switches in Pliny’s letters, and over half of those in Fronto, are categorized as GCS, and over three-quarters of switches within this category in Fronto are literary, rhetorical or grammatical terms.⁴⁵ In Suetonius, no category is so dominant: the highest proportion for any single category is GCS at 32 per cent, followed by Quotation at 21 per cent. Patterns of distribution are more similar to those in Cicero, where the two largest categories are also GCS and Quotation (at 24 per cent and 28 per cent respectively).

A comparison between the distribution of functions of code-switching in non-epistolary sources in Suetonius and the epistolary corpora reveals the similarities and differences between the use of Greek in different contexts.⁴⁶ These similarities and differences shed light on the nature of epistolary Greek and on distinctions between oral and written code-switching, questions with which we have grappled across this volume. All the occurrences of the categories of code-switching unique to Suetonius appear in a non-epistolary context. In epistolary corpora, the categories of ‘Insult/Mockery’ and

⁴⁴ For a discussion of how to categorize Suetonius’ genre, and its originality, see Power 2014. For the complexity of the notion of genre across Latin literature, see Depew and Obbink 2000.

⁴⁵ For a breakdown of the category of GCS across all the corpora, see [Table 15](#). This table shows that the range of subcategories within the category GCS is also greater in Suetonius than in any other author but Cicero.

⁴⁶ For a breakdown of functions across the major sources of Greek in Suetonius (narrative voice, letters and oral sources), see [Table 31](#) in the Appendix. This table separates those instances of code-switching that Suetonius records as certainly coming from an oral context from those instances whose oral provenance is probable but less explicit: this latter group is recorded in the column labelled ‘Oral?’. For the distribution of functions in other epistolary corpora, see [Tables 22–8](#) in the Appendix.

‘Omen/Prophecy’ exist only as higher-level functions: they are never the immediate salient function within the text, but must be read through other categories of code-switching such as literary quotations.⁴⁷ This difference could indicate that the use of Greek beyond letters is more direct and blunt.⁴⁸ The comparative subtlety of the use of Greek in the letters may be seen as part of the construction of a tactful and friendly façade that runs across elite letters and reflects their function in helping elite actors to negotiate relationships and get what they want.⁴⁹

A closer look at the subcategories of ‘Quotation’ across the different sources of code-switching in Suetonius illustrates some further distinctions of epistolary Greek. Contexts other than letters in Suetonius include Greek quotations from a different set of sources from those in letters (see [Table 16](#) in [Chapter 2](#) (pp. 95–6) for a breakdown of the sources of quotation across the different corpora). The category of ‘Quotation: popular verse’ is illuminating here. This type of quotation could be seen as only a slight extension of the category of proverbial quotation common in letters. In their witticisms and wordplay, the popular verses share other features of the frequently ‘light-hearted’ language of letters (see below, p. 245).⁵⁰ They could moreover sit easily with epistolary writers’ own characterization of letters as having been formed out of the language of ‘everyday’ (see [Chapter 2, 3](#) and below). Their absence suggests that there are some limitations on the appropriate sources for Greek quotation in letters: here ‘Quotation’ is restricted to more formal ‘Literary’ quotations, or at least traceable proverbs, many of which were probably published in collections. A comparison with the sources of Latin quotations in Suetonius within and beyond letters could push this argument further.

⁴⁷ For an example of the operation of these veiled criticisms within correspondence, see the discussion of the letters between Cicero and Appius ([Chapter 3](#) pp. 154–8).

⁴⁸ On this theme, see [Chapter 2](#). On the subtle, ‘distancing’ effect of Greek code-switching in Latin literature, see Adams 2003a: 330–s4. We argue below that, partly due to the relationship between epistolary code-switching and the language of popular criticism in Suetonius’ text, ‘distancing’ is a less important function in the cited epistolary texts in Suetonius than it is elsewhere.

⁴⁹ See [Chapter 3](#).

⁵⁰ On the light-heartedness of epistolary code-switching, see Adams 2003a: 321.

The question then becomes how to explain the distinctions that we see in the Greek, and what bearing these explanations have on our understanding of epistolary language. Of particular interest given the frequent characterization of epistolary language as colloquial and conversational (Chapters 2 and 3) is the distinction between the use of Greek in oral and written contexts. The majority of instances of the categories of ‘Insult/Mockery’, ‘Omen/Prophecy’ and ‘Quotation: popular verse’, which are all absent from letters, are from oral or probably oral contexts.⁵¹ There is, however, otherwise a large degree of overlap between the categories of code-switching cited from oral and written sources. Although, as we have seen, oral contexts admit quotations from a wider range of sources than letters, literary quotations are the most common subcategory of quotations in all the epistolary corpora and in the corpus of oral code-switches from Suetonius (accounting for 45 per cent, 88 per cent, 74 per cent and 68 per cent of all quotations in Cicero, Pliny, Fronto and the Suetonian oral switches respectively: again, see Chapter 2, Table 16 and Table 31 (Appendix) for a breakdown).⁵² Significantly, the high levels of literary quotation in oral code-switches in Suetonius make them distinct from code-switching patterns in the modern corpora discussed in Chapter 2 (see pp. 91, 93).

This evidence suggests that the combination of author, addressee, context and register is a more significant factor in determining patterns of code-switching in Suetonius than whether it is oral or written. Thus, for example, emperors’ speech and speech labelled as *uulgus* are both oral sources frequently cited by Suetonius, but each employ different patterns of code-switching: emperors, for example, frequently cite lines of Homer aloud, but popular verses, common on the streets

⁵¹ Popular verses themselves occupy an ambiguous position between oral and written, exemplified by Suetonius’ description of the popular verses directed against Nero, which were *proscripta aut uulgata* (Ner. 39.2; see discussion below). Three of the four examples of quotation from popular verse therefore appear in the ‘Oral?’ column in Table 31 (Appendix): the final example (written in criticism of Domitian, Dom. 14.2) appears in *libelli*.

⁵² The two quotations within the corpus of epistolary code-switches in Suetonius are also literary quotations. For the figures, see Tables 22–9 (Appendix).

of Rome, are absent from their speech, just as they are from letters. It is argued below, however, that this does not mean a crude binary exists between ‘popular’ and ‘elite’ Greek.

The consequences of all of this for our understanding of letters as a category and the nature of their language are complex. Suetonius reminds us about both what the language of letters is and what it is not. One way of assessing this is against ancient authors’ own claims about the language of letters as *cotidiano sermo* ‘the language of everyday’ (*Aug.* 87.1).⁵³ Suetonius offers insights into the appropriateness of both elements of this description. The associations between the language of letters and the language of spoken conversation apparent in the word *sermo* and frequently commented on in scholarship on ancient letters (see [Chapter 2](#)) are also apparent within Suetonius’ evidence. The evidence from sources other than letters suggests that the patterns of code-switching in letters may reflect the patterns of code-switching in comparable oral contexts to a large extent.⁵⁴ Suetonius, however, also offers us a reminder of the limitations on the type and nature of these conversations. A comparison with the snatches of Greek in sources other than letters in Suetonius demonstrates that there are aspects of ‘everyday’ language that are absent from letters.⁵⁵ The ‘everyday’ world of the letters is frequently that of high politics, and letters are used to manage critical personal and political relationships: the code-switching they admit is regulated according to these functions.⁵⁶

⁵³ Cicero also describes the letters as having been woven *cotidianis uerbis* at *Fam.* 1X.21.1 (see all preceding chapters). Note Clarkson [2015a](#): 104 who cautions against taking Cicero’s description at *Fam.* 1X.21.1 too seriously; this cautious approach is borne out in the restrictions on the letters as *cotidiano sermone* discussed here.

⁵⁴ On the similarity between the language of letters and the language of elite conversation, see also Hall [2009](#): 11; [Chapter 2](#).

⁵⁵ This fits with Biville [2003](#): 26–9, who describes how the epistolary register avoids vulgar colloquialisms. Cf. Adams [2016](#): 193–6, who provides a brief commentary on some colloquialisms in Augustus’ epistolary Latin. This may have been down to Augustus’ own quirks (on which see further below); Adams ([2013](#): 21) notes that Augustus disregarded the distinction between *Latine* and *uulgo* because ‘he thought clarity was more important than ideals of linguistic correctness’.

⁵⁶ For a discussion of register and formality of Cicero’s letters, and the way in which this relates to their purpose, see Hall [2009](#): 10–11.

It is, however, also vital to remember the many points of overlap between the language of letters and the language of other contexts in Suetonius. Letters work across registers, and the possibility of manipulating their language according to author, addressee and context makes them an effective means of communication.⁵⁷ This fluidity of register is mirrored across the Suetonian corpus.⁵⁸ In what follows, we draw out some of the ways in which Greek operates in the different layers of Suetonius' text before moving in to consider the language of Augustus and his letters against these wider patterns.

Greek Code-Switches in Suetonius' Narrative Voice

The appearance of Greek in any form, but especially the appearance of code-switching in the authorial voice, may be taken as one marker of the genre of '(not) history', to use Wallace-Hadrill's description, that Suetonius is writing.⁵⁹ It signals the relative informality and scholarly method of his text and distinguishes it from formal Latin historiography. Greek in Suetonius' narrative voice also provides one important medium through which instances of Greek within the text from different sources, including the letters, may be read.⁶⁰

The forty-seven code-switches in Suetonius' narrative voice counted in the database comprise a slightly unusual set. Just three appear in Greek script in Kaster's 2016 edition of *De vita Caesarum* and *De grammaticis et rhetoribus* and just one

⁵⁷ Trapp 2003: 14, for example, discusses how Cicero works across 'many different layers of formality' in his letters.

⁵⁸ For scholarship on Suetonius' genre, see n. 42 p. 237 above.

⁵⁹ Wallace-Hadrill 1983: 9. On the presence of Greek as a marker of Suetonius' genre, see, for example, Townend 1960: 98–9. For further discussion of the relationship between code-switching and genre, see Chapter 3 (pp. 114–20).

⁶⁰ Clearly, all the code-switches in Suetonius are 'in Suetonius' narrative voice' in some sense; it is just that the majority of these are also quotations from various sources. The forty-seven switches isolated here are those that are not, or at least are not presented as, code-switches in or from other sources, oral or written: these forty-seven switches are examples of Suetonius' own use of Greek, and it is useful to examine their patterns against other sources of Greek within the text.

in Rolfe's edition of *De uiris illustribus*:⁶¹ *Numitorius quidam rescripsit 'Antibucolica,' duas modo eclogas, sed insulsissime* παρωδήσας (*Poet. Vir.* 43); *quod genus θέσεις et ἀνασκευάς et κατασκευάς Graeci uocant* (*Gram. et rhet.* 25.4); *olim autem eas appellatione Graeca ὑποθέσεις uocabant* (*Gram. et rhet.* 25.5) and *inter cetera in eo mirati sunt homines et obliuionem et inconsiderantiam, uel ut Graece dicam, μετεωρίαν et ἀβλεψίαν* (*Cl.* 39.1). The fourth is unusual amongst the code-switches in Suetonius' narrative in other ways too: it is the only code-switch with the function of 'Description', one of just four to be explicitly flagged, and it interacts with the Greek of the letters in illuminating ways, as will be discussed below.

In general, the code-switches in the narrative also have different functional patterns from other sources of Greek in Suetonius. In contrast to the corpus as a whole, 67 per cent of the switches in his narrative are categorized as 'GCS', 21 per cent are 'Referential', and 8 per cent are 'Naming'. In the vast majority of cases then, the code-switching in the authorial voice falls into those categories that are used to evoke a Greek cultural sphere, object or person, rather than those that involve a more creative use of Greek. These are also categories that could, when deployed in their appropriate Greek context, come closest to being unmarked (see [Chapter 3](#)). The 'Greekness' of the objects that Suetonius evokes with his use of Greek is not, however, always neutral and his Greek could therefore be used to contribute to his (negative) portrayal of the emperors. As the two Tiberian anecdotes showed, the appropriateness of emperors' engagement with the Greek language and culture was an important thread running through the *Lives*. Suetonius' own use of Greek was one yardstick by which this could be measured.

The code-switches from the life of Nero are a good example. Nero's Hellenism is highlighted by Suetonius throughout the *Life*, and in this connection a number of Greek terms, both

⁶¹ Kaster [2016a](#) and Rolfe [1998b](#).

code-switches and borrowings, appear.⁶² This Hellenism was also a point of tension, and Greek could be used to underline this in complex ways, as the following passage demonstrates:

quare omnium in se odio incitato nihil contumeliarum defuit quin subiret. statuae eius a uertice cirrus appositus est cum inscriptione Graeca: 'nunc demum agona esse, et traderet tandem'. alterius collo ascopa deligata simulque titulus: 'ego quod potui. sed tu culleum meruisti'. (Nero 45.2)

Once he had aroused the hatred of everyone against him, there was no form of affront to which he was not subjected. A curl was placed on the head of his statue with a Greek inscription: 'Now there is a real contest and you must at last surrender'. To the neck of another statue a sack was tied and with it the words: 'I have done what I could, but you have earned the sack'.

Here, Suetonius switches between Latin and Greek to highlight the accusations made against the emperor and their associations with his Hellenism. In the first incident described, Nero's Greekness is mocked: Rolfe interprets the curl as 'doubtless an allusion to the long hair which he wore during his Greek trip'.⁶³ The Greek language of the inscription provided the original author with a mechanism for making this allusion. Suetonius, however, quotes the inscription in Latin. The only Greek term included is *agona*, perhaps singled out to encourage readers to recall his deployment of this term in his critical descriptions of Nero's introduction of Greek-style musical contests at Nero 21.1 and 23.1. Suetonius continues the allusions to Nero's Hellenism via a probable Greek code-switch to describe the sack (*ascopa*) in his narration of the second incident.⁶⁴ Greek is here both the subject of criticism in its own right and a vehicle

⁶² See, for example, *Nero* 12, describing Nero's cultural interests, where there is a high concentration of Greek borrowings (*naumachiam, pyrrichas, epeborum, pyrricharum, gymncium, Neronia, gymnasio, orchestram, citharae, gymnico, pyxidem, athletarum*). This passage also contains the word *buthysiae*, counted as a code-switch since it is the only example of this term in Latin (*TLL* 11.2259.80–1).

⁶³ Rolfe 1998b: 163.

⁶⁴ There is confusion over this word: Kaster 2016a, like Ihm, prints *ascopa*; Howard 1896 and Rolfe 1998b print ἀσκός. Both probably represent a code-switch: according to *OLD* and *TLL* (ii.772.10–20), *ascopa* is linked to Greek ἀσκοπήρα, and this is its only appearance in classical Latin. Cass. Dio 61.16.1 relates the incident more briefly, using the (unusual) word μολγός to describe the sack.

for wider criticism of Nero. The comment about Nero ‘earning the sack’ is a reference to his murder of his mother: the *culleus* was the technical term for the sack in which parricides were sewn up and thrown into the Tiber. The Greek term *ascopa* is, paradoxically, used to mark out this Roman form of punishment: it continues the use of Greek across the *Life* as a way to frame criticism of Nero’s behaviour.

The appearance of Greek in the authorial voice was limited and did not involve the creative and elaborate wordplay apparent in some of the oral and written sources that will be discussed below, but choices about its placement could make it an effective and subtle tool for Suetonius. It demonstrates his ability to manipulate language as a marker and his sensitivity to its expected and appropriate contexts. This sensitivity is also visible in Suetonius’ positioning and framing of code-switches quoted from other sources and has an effect on our reading of them.

*quae uulgo ... uocabatur*⁶⁵

The inclusion of examples of oral and written Greek attributed to groups other than named elite actors, frequently labelled as ‘popular’ or ‘common’, *uulgo*, and apparently gathered from the streets of Rome, distinguishes the text of Suetonius from the language of letters and its sources of quotation. If, however, we look in more detail at linguistic games played within these verses, the distance between the Greek in letters and that in apparently ‘popular’ sources in Suetonius can be compressed.⁶⁶ An example is the bilingual pun *arci* written up on one of Domitian’s new arches:

ianos arcusque cum quadrigis et insignibus triumphorum per regiones urbis tantos ac tot exstruxit ut cuidam Graece inscriptum sit: ‘APKI’. (Dom. 13.2)

⁶⁵ Aug. 70.1.

⁶⁶ On social variation in Latin, and the distinctiveness (or not) of ‘vulgar’ Latin, see in particular Adams 2013a and Clackson 2015a.

Domitian built so many and such great arcades and arches with chariots and the insignia of triumphs throughout the regions of the city that on one of them, 'It is enough' was written in Greek.

The humorous criticism of Domitian here relies on the similarity of Latin *arcūs* 'arches' in Latin and ἄρκεϊ 'it is enough' in Greek.⁶⁷ This shows that the use of bilingual puns to engage in witty commentary reaches beyond elite letters.

Similarly, the use of Greek in popular verses written to criticize Nero mirror the use of Greek in letters and in Suetonius' own manipulation of Greek to highlight this emperor's excessive Hellenism discussed above:

multa Graecae Latineque proscripta aut uulgata sunt sicut illa,

Νέρων Ὀρέστης Ἀλκμέων μητροκτόνος

νεόψηφον· Νέρων ἰδίαν μητέρα ἀπέκτεινε. (*Nero* 39.2)

Many [sayings and verses] were posted or circulated both in Greek and Latin, for example the following: 'Nero, Orestes, Alcmeon their mothers slew'. 'A calculation new. Nero his mother slew'.

The first verse links Nero to characters from Greek myth and literature who have also killed their mothers. This, combined with the striking Greek description μητροκτόνος ('matricide') is not dissimilar to Cicero's use of Greek in his letters to discuss Caesar's and Pompey's un-Roman, and unacceptable, political actions during the Civil War (see [Chapter 3](#)). It shows that the Greek political and cultural spheres carry force beyond named elite actors in letters. The second example also shows lively playing with language. It relies on the fact that the Greek letters have numerical values. Here, the numerical value of the letters in Nero's name is equal to that in the rest of the sentence: we therefore have a 'calculation' proving the emperor is a matricide.⁶⁸ The fact that these verses were meant to be used

⁶⁷ Rolfe 1998b: 353; Kaster 2016b: 258. It is interesting to note that this is a possible case where both Greek language and script are required to convey the bilingual pun: Kaster argues that *arci* 'would have been insufficient to suggest the Greek verb' and *APKEI* 'would have been insufficient in isolation to suggest the abnormal form of the Latin noun' (*arci* is a variant form of the plural of *arcus*: see *TLL* ii.475.80–2 for the form). Kaster therefore chooses the 'hybrid form' *APKI*. For a different interpretation of the script transmission process here, see Rollo 2019: 617–18.

⁶⁸ Rolfe 1998b: 153. On this practice, known as isopsephism, see Thomas 2007: 256.

and repeated (*uulgata*) shows the wide currency of these uses of Greek.

Of course, how ‘popular’ these sources really were may be questioned, but the fact that Suetonius can sustain this fiction at all suggests that an awareness of language and the careful use of Greek to engage in political commentary were not confined to the political and literary elite, but could at least be presented as being employed by a wider section of society.⁶⁹ As a result, the Greek could function both as the language of the emperors, and, simultaneously, as the language of popular criticism made against them. This duality both adds to the force of Greek in Suetonius’ text and demonstrates the need to read its different layers of Greek against one another: the letters between Augustus and Livia, discussing Claudius’ shortcomings, provide a good example of this (pp. 267–8).

Letters and the *Lives*

Fragments of letters appear across the *Lives* as supporting evidence for Suetonius’ interpretations of emperors’ and other actors’ characters. The majority of these fragments come from letters written by Augustus, although other authors appear occasionally. Augustus also provides the vast majority of the evidence for epistolary code-switching: of the twenty-seven Greek code-switches within the Suetonian corpus, twenty-three are found within letters written by Augustus (for a breakdown of the functions of the code-switching in the letters cited by Suetonius see [Table 30](#) (Appendix)).⁷⁰

⁶⁹ For a sceptical view, arguing that elite literary authors deliberately label these kinds of text as popular to ‘cushion’ or distance themselves from their content, see Zadorojnyi 2011: 129. One piece of evidence against this view, however, is the fact that one of Suetonius’ verses (cited at *Dom.* 14.2 from *libelli*) circulating in criticism of Domitian appears underneath one of the painted panels in the House of the Epigrams in Pompeii, albeit with a different meaning. For a discussion of these panels, see Bergmann 2007.

⁷⁰ Of the remaining four code-switches, two appear in a letter by Cicero to Dolabella (*Gram. et rhet.* 14), one appears in a letter from the grammarian L. Ateius Philologus to Laelius Hermas (*Gram. et rhet.* 10) and one appears in a letter from Cassius of Parma to Augustus (*Aug.* 4.2). The *Lives* therefore contain letters by no emperors other than Augustus; on the significance of this, see Wallace-Hadrill 1983: 91–6.

Suetonius' role as *ab epistulis*, the official responsible for the imperial correspondence, meant that he had extensive experience of both the style and the practicalities of the emperor's epistolary output.⁷¹ At this point in time, the *ab epistulis* was responsible for both Greek and Latin letters; it was only after the Hadrianic period that the post was split by language, and Suetonius therefore must have had knowledge of epistolary conventions in both Latin and Greek.⁷² As discussed above, it is also very likely that Suetonius had access to Augustus' letters via the imperial archives. The authenticity of these letters is not, however, the only issue: Suetonius' skill in framing and selecting the letters and his linguistic sensitivity mean that he is able to manipulate our reading of them and their language.

Although Suetonius was particularly well placed to make use of epistolary evidence in his biographies, he was not the only author to do so.⁷³ Trapp identifies three main functions of letters in ancient biographical writing: to illuminate particular aspects of a person's character; to prove or deny a particular claim or interpretation; or as narrative events in their own right.⁷⁴ All three of these functions are present in the *Lives*, although the first two are the most significant and the most relevant to our reading of the code-switching.

In line with ancient critics' understanding of letters as revealing the soul of the author,⁷⁵ Suetonius does little explicitly to deconstruct the nature of letters as evidence: they are introduced as proofs of his interpretation of character

⁷¹ On Suetonius as *ab epistulis*, see the detailed discussions in Lindsay 1994 and, against several aspects of this interpretation, Wardle 2002.

⁷² Wardle 1993: 91.

⁷³ As Trapp 2006: 336 opines, an unanswered question is in fact why Suetonius and others do not make *more* use of the evidence of letters, given their usefulness. He argues that the issue is one of difficulty of access and concern about admitting too much 'low' and 'informal' material into their histories. Both of these arguments are, however, difficult to sustain in the case of Suetonius. See Chapter 4 for letters as resources for historians, ancient and modern.

⁷⁴ Trapp 2006: 336.

⁷⁵ See, for example, Demetrius *De Elocutione* 227: '[t]he letter should abound in glimpses of character. It may be said that everybody reveals his own soul in letters'. For discussion of this comment, see Trapp 2006: 335.

and action. For example, he uses a letter from Augustus to Tiberius to show that there is no doubt about Augustus' love of gaming.⁷⁶ Similarly, at *Tib.* 21.3, Suetonius introduces a series of Augustus' letters as evidence for his argument that, contrary to popular opinion, Augustus held Tiberius in high esteem. This treatment contrasts with modern understandings of ancient letters as rhetorical performances that parade carefully selected aspects of character or opinions.⁷⁷ Suetonius must also have been aware of this performative aspect of letters, but it suits his agenda at times to present epistolary material as objective and neutral.

Suetonius' process of selection and framing means that the letters he cites have a very different shape from those by the other authors considered in this volume. The letter collections of Cicero, Pliny and Fronto contain complete or near-complete letters with, in many cases, detailed contextual information including salutation, date and location. Suetonius, however, presents only small fragments of letters and contextual information is limited to how the letter(s) fits into his own narrative.⁷⁸ Whereas in the correspondence of Cicero, Pliny and Fronto it is possible to see the ways in which letters move between different themes,⁷⁹ each epistolary extract in Suetonius concentrates on a single theme. The unit of analysis is therefore necessarily a different one: the letters must be considered thematically or by recipient rather than at the level of an individual letter. Indeed, when Suetonius draws on the evidence of several letters to illustrate a particular theme, it can be impossible to determine the number of letters from which he cites.⁸⁰ Although he provides

⁷⁶ Aug. 71.2: *nec id dubium est. autographa quadam epistula.*

⁷⁷ On the display and performance present in letters, see Trapp 2006: 339–40; he describes them as 'actively biographical' (339).

⁷⁸ Birch 1981 is a useful attempt to fill in the gaps in this contextual information in the letters between Augustus and Tiberius at *Tib.* 21.4–7: he aims to determine the date and circumstances in which the letters quoted were written.

⁷⁹ For an excellent discussion of the development of themes in Pliny's correspondence, see Gibson and Morello 2012.

⁸⁰ On the difficulties of determining the number of letters quoted in illustration of the relationship between Augustus and Tiberius at *Tib.* 21.4–7, see Birch 1981: 156.

an unparalleled macro-level framework of language practices and attitudes beyond the letters, the level of contextual detail for individual letters is usually minimal, and is seen primarily through Suetonius' own editorial lens. In some ways, however, this is only a slightly different version of a problem common to all the corpora discussed in this volume: all four have been collected and marshalled by an editor or editors at various points in their history. At least in the case of Suetonius, the evidence for this editor is explicit, and it is therefore easier to read the letters in relations to their editorial framework.

Augustus' Letters

The primary purpose of Augustus' letters within the *Lives* is to offer insights into the emperor's private character and opinions, but they also hold a direct philological interest for Suetonius. Indeed, as Wallace-Hadrill notes, it is an open question whether Suetonius first approached the letters for their historical or for their philological value: there is evidence that, before deploying the evidence of the letters in the *Lives*, he had previously used them in his literary and philological works.⁸¹ Within the *Lives* too, he uses the letters explicitly as evidence of the emperor's particular habits and quirks of orthography and expression:

cotidiano sermone quaedam frequentius et notabiliter usurpasse eum litterae ipsius autographae ostendant ... ponit assidue et pro stulto 'baceolum' et pro pullo 'pullaceum' et pro cerrito 'uacerosum' et 'uapide' se habere pro 'male' et 'betizare' pro 'languere', quod uulgo 'lachanizare' dicitur, item 'simus' pro 'sumus' et 'domos' genetiuo casu singulari pro 'domus' ... notaui et in chirographo eius illa praecipue: non diuidit uerba nec ab extrema parte uersuum abundantis litteras in alterum transfert sed ibidem statim subicit circumducitque. orthographiam, id est formulam rationemque scribendi a grammaticis institutam, non adeo custodit ac uidetur eorum potius sequi opinionem qui perinde scribendum ac loquamur existiment. (Aug. 87.1–88.1)

⁸¹ For Suetonius' philological interest in the letters and for evidence of Suetonius' use of Augustus' letters in philological works cited by later grammarians, see Wallace-Hadrill 1983: 92–3.

The Language of Letters and Beyond

That in his everyday conversation he used certain favourite and peculiar expressions appears from letters in his own hand ... He continually used *baceolus* (dolt) for *stultus* (fool), for *pullus* (dark) *pulleiaceus* (darkish), and for *cerritus* (mad) *uacerrosus* (blockhead); also *uapide se habere* (feel flat) for *male se habere* (feel badly), and *betizare* (be like a beet) for *languere* (be weak), for which the vulgar term is *lathanizare*. Besides he used *simus* for *sumus* and *domos* in the genitive singular instead of *domus* ... I have also observed this special peculiarity in his manner of writing: he does not divide words or carry superfluous letters from the end of one line to the beginning of the next, but writes them just below the rest of the word and draws a loop around them. He does not strictly comply with orthography, that is to say the theoretical rules of spelling laid down by the grammarians, seeming to be rather of the mind of those who believe that we should spell exactly as we pronounce.

Suetonius apparently makes these generalizations about Augustus' style on the basis of wide reading across the corpus of Augustus' correspondence.⁸² His underlying linguistic interest in Augustus' epistolary style, however, makes it necessary to ask what impact this interest has on the selectivity and representativeness of the epistolary evidence, and especially the bilingual epistolary evidence, that Suetonius chooses to cite. It is striking that the 'humorous' bilingual coinage,⁸³ *betizare*, formed from a Latin root and a Greek suffix, figures amongst the list of Augustus' linguistic quirks in the passage above: Suetonius is alert to Augustus' bilingualism on a philological level.

This sensitivity to bilingualism may have led Suetonius to select passages with some linguistic interest over those without. Wardle's argument that Suetonius' characterized Augustus as 'witty, inventive, and somewhat quirky' in order to defend him against Hadrian's criticisms of him as 'not well educated' should also be borne in mind.⁸⁴ This aim may have led Suetonius to exaggerate certain qualities of Augustus' style. Further distortion comes from the frequent interaction

⁸² Wardle 2014: 490.

⁸³ Adams 2003a: 420, commenting on *Aug.* 87.2. On this coinage, see also Chapter 2.

⁸⁴ See Wardle 2014: 489. For Hadrian's characterization of Augustus as *non pereruditus*, see Char. 1.271K.

between Augustus' language in the letters and the language in which Suetonius frames and refers to them.

Nonetheless, it is important that Suetonius never comments on the use of Greek and Greek code-switching within the letters per se: it suggests that epistolary code-switching was a sufficiently common feature of Augustus' letters that it did not require commentary. Even if there were some distortion, Suetonius' selections from the letters had to be plausibly representative of Augustus' style.⁸⁵ This adds to the evidence from the correspondence of Cicero, Pliny and Fronto that Greek code-switching was a common feature of elite epistolary communication amongst the republican and imperial elite.⁸⁶

Augustus' Greek Beyond the Letters

The evidence for Augustus' epistolary code-switching sits alongside other evidence for Augustus' Greek: Suetonius' commentary and anecdote about the emperor's linguistic attitudes and practices, familiar from across the *Lives*, and the citation of Augustus' Greek in other contexts, both oral and written.⁸⁷ These different layers of evidence do not, however, sit easily together. The apparent contradictions and variations between them, and the way in which these can be thought through and resolved, shed light on the nature and distinctiveness of the language of letters.

The strongest surface contradiction appears to be between Suetonius' assessment of Augustus' competence in Greek and the evidence of it in practice.⁸⁸ Contrary to the evidence of

⁸⁵ Fragments of Augustus' letters from other sources, including Aulus Gellius, are collected in Malcovati 1967: comparison between these and those used in Suetonius could shed further light on the representativeness of Suetonius' selections.

⁸⁶ There are, moreover, some direct points of connection between these correspondents, and these are drawn out in Chapter 6.

⁸⁷ For a comprehensive catalogue and commentary on Augustus' Greek, both within and beyond Suetonius and letters, see Gelsomino 1958, 1959. The articles are divided between the evidence of the 'public documents' and 'private life' respectively.

⁸⁸ Dubuisson 2002, especially 161–3, and Rochette 2015: 159–61 also note and discuss this contradiction.

the letters demonstrating that Augustus frequently made use of and, as in the coinage *betizare*, played between, Greek and Latin, Suetonius' commentary minimizes and restricts Augustus' use and knowledge of Greek. He summarizes Augustus' ability in Greek as follows:

ne Graecarum quidem disciplinarum leuiore studio tenebatur in quibus et ipsis praestabat largiter ... non tamen ut aut loqueretur expedite aut componere aliquid auderet, nam et si quid res exigeret, Latine formabat uertendumque alii dabat. sed plane poematum quoque non imperitus ... in euoluendis utriusque linguae auctoribus nihil aequae sectabatur, quam praecepta et exempla publice uel priuatim salubria, eaque ad uerbum excerpta aut ad domesticos aut ad exercituum prouinciarumque rectores aut ad urbis magistratus plerumque mittebat prout quique monitione indigerent. (Aug. 89.1–2)

He was equally interested in Greek studies, and in these too he excelled greatly ... Yet he never acquired the ability to speak Greek fluently or dared to compose anything in it; for if he had occasion to use the language, he wrote what he had to say in Latin and gave it to someone else to translate. Still, he was far from being ignorant of Greek poetry ... In reading the writers of both tongues there was nothing for which he looked so carefully as precepts and examples instructive to the public or to individuals; these he would often copy word for word, and send to the members of his household, or to his generals and provincial governors, whenever any of them required admonition.

Some scholars have taken Suetonius' commentary here as evidence of Augustus' limited competence in Greek: Best, for example, concludes from it that 'Augustus possessed the least fluency and competence with the Greek language [of all the Julio-Claudian emperors]'.⁸⁹ Suetonius' judgement on Augustus' Greek is not, however, all-encompassing: he does not deny Augustus' ability in Greek altogether, but rather describes some particular limitations on his knowledge and use of it. The choice of the verb *non auderet* rather than *non posset*, which emphasizes his reluctance to use Greek rather than his inability, underlines this. Suetonius' emphasis on Augustus' reading of literary Greek to extract *praecepta* and

⁸⁹ Best 1976: 45. Against this view, however, Rochette 2015: 156–7 and 161 assesses Augustus' knowledge of Greek as having been quite significant.

exempla also fits with the emperor's frequent use of Greek literary quotations in cited oral examples.

Even with these qualifications, the assessment of Augustus' Greek in this passage sits oddly with other evidence that Suetonius gives for Augustus' use of Greek in letters and elsewhere. An anecdote in which Augustus plays a Greek literary game with Thrasyllus seems directly to contradict Augustus' comments in the passage above:

uicinam Capreis insulam Apragopolim appellabat a desidia secedentium illuc e comitatu suo. sed ex dilectis unum Masgaban nomine quasi conditorem insulae κτίστην vocare consueuerat. huius Masgabae ante annum defuncti tumulum cum e triclinio animaduertisset magna turba multisque luminibus frequentari, uersum compositum ex tempore clare pronuntiavit:

κτίστου δὲ τύμβον εἰσορῶ πυρούμενον.

conuersusque ad Thrasyllum Tiberi comitem contra accubantem et ignarum rei interrogauit cuiusnam poetae putaret esse, quo haesitante subiecit alium:

ὄρθς φάεσσι Μασγάβαν τιμώμενον;

ac de hoc quoque consuluit. cum ille nihil aliud responderet quam cuiuscumque essent optimos esse, cachinnum sustulit atque in iocos effusus est. (Aug. 98.4)

He called the neighbouring part of the island of Capreae Apragopolis from the laziness of some of his company who sojourned there. Besides he used to call one of his favourites, Masgaba by name, Ktistes, as if he were the founder of the island. Noticing from his dining room that the tomb of this Masgaba, who had died the year before, was visited by a large crowd with many torches, he uttered aloud this verse, composed offhand:

'I see the founder's tomb alight with fire'.

and turning to Thrasyllus, one of the suite of Tiberius who was reclining opposite him and knew nothing about the matter, he asked of what poet he thought it was the work. When Thrasyllus hesitated, he added another verse:

'See you with lights Masgaba honoured now?'

and asked his opinion of this one also. When Thrasyllus could say nothing except that they were very good, whoever made them, he burst into a laugh and fell into joking about it.

Augustus here engages with Greek in a number of different ways and seems to take great pleasure in it. Both his nickname for Masgaba (κτίστης, i.e. founder) and in particular for the island of Capri (*Apragopolis*, literally 'the land of do-nothings') involve a playful use of Greek: the latter is possibly an Augustan coinage deriving from two different Greek words,

and has an ‘Aristophanic’ flavour.⁹⁰ Particularly striking in the light of the earlier passage, however, is Augustus’ off-the-cuff composition of two Greek verses. Both in the fact that they are composed *ex tempore* and in Suetonius’ choice of the verb *compositum*, they directly contradict the evidence of *Augustus* 89.1, where Suetonius says explicitly that Augustus *non ... componere aliquid auderet*. As Wardle points out, the verses in 98.4 are not without ambiguity (the verb *πυρούμενον* is slightly ‘forced’ in its meaning),⁹¹ and this may be the reason for Thrasyllus’ hesitation in identifying them, but they are not altogether unskilful: Gelsomino is more generous in his analysis, describing how Augustus plays with tragic language to create a neat pastiche.⁹² This playing around with literary language also contrasts with the fixed use of literature as a source of examples described at *Augustus* 89.1–2.

The question therefore is how to resolve these inconsistencies. Wardle argues that Augustus’ lack of fluency in Greek expressed at *Augustus* 89.1–2 is ‘implausible per se’: instead, his reluctance to speak Greek *ex tempore* is ‘ideological’, and stems from his desire not to compromise his standing as a Roman by using Greek in a public setting.⁹³ The emperor’s concern over his linguistic strategy is familiar from the discussion above and might be compared to Fronto’s eagerness both to have perfect Greek and not to be seen to be *too* Greek (Chapter 4). According to Wardle, the ‘relaxed, private context’ in which Augustus teases Thrasyllus is ‘crucial’: he would not be able to play the same language games in public.⁹⁴ The evidence from the rest of Suetonius’ *Life of*

⁹⁰ On this coinage, see Gelsomino 1959: 128 and Wardle 2014: 545. Both point out that the model for this coinage may be Varro: he coined the terms *Anthropopolis* and *Marcopolis*.

⁹¹ Wardle 2014: 546 and 547 on the ambiguities of *πυρούμενον*: it should mean ‘being set fire to’ but actually describes ‘the tomb’s illumination by torches’.

⁹² Gelsomino 1959: 124–5.

⁹³ Wardle 2014: 495.

⁹⁴ Wardle 2014: 546. Rochette 2015: 160 suggests that the geographical setting of Capri, in the Bay of Naples (‘un centre de culture grecque en Italie’) plays a part in making the use of Greek acceptable.

Augustus provides some support for this view: Augustus' oral use of Greek in more public and less playful settings is dominated by set Homeric phrases and proverbs, in a manner comparable to his use of *exempla* and *praecepta* at *Augustus* 89.2.⁹⁵ The evidence here reinforces the conclusions of our earlier discussion of functional categories in demonstrating that the oral/written distinction was not a determining factor in language use, and that Augustus' language use was carefully calibrated by a combination of space, author, addressee, and context.⁹⁶ Despite the evidence of *Augustus* 89.1–2, it is impossible to make a blanket judgement of Augustus' linguistic practices. One open question here is whether or not Suetonius was aware of the contradictions that he sets up. His own linguistic sensitivity makes it tempting to suggest that he was, and that there was a purpose behind it: in leaving the contradictions in place, he highlights more effectively the variations in Augustus' Greek between contexts.

These variations in Augustus' language use reinforce our understanding of the variety and unfixedness of letters as a category. Augustus' letters play across the different registers and types of Greek described by Suetonius: the playful and relaxed use of Greek in, for example, a letter to Horace sits alongside the more formal use of literary *exempla* also seen in more public contexts. The limitations to the language of letters discussed above (p. 238) are, however, respected in the letters of Augustus: he never employs mock literary quotations in the same playful manner as in the Thrasyllus anecdote. This combination of variety and careful limitation provides insights into the types of relationships and functions that Augustus attempts to negotiate in his letters.

⁹⁵ See, for example, *Aug.* 65.4: Augustus is described as using a line from Homer at every mention (*ad omnem ... mentionem*) of Agrippa and the Julias. Rochette 2015: 158, however, makes the useful point that, despite Suetonius' commentary on Augustus' Greek phrases, there are relatively few actual examples of them: he attributes this to the fact that the majority of sources on Augustus' reign are in Latin.

⁹⁶ Rochette 2015: 161 also stresses the importance of context, and the cultural and political dynamics behind it, in determining Augustus' language use.

Code-Switching in Augustus' Letters

The evidence for code-switching in the cited letters of Augustus is concentrated within a small number of passages, spread across the lives of different emperors and on a few themes: letters to Livia discussing Claudius, letters to Tiberius negotiating their relationship, a letter to Virgil requesting a portion of the *Aeneid*, and a letter to Horace requesting that Maecenas move into Augustus' service.⁹⁷ The twenty-three Greek code-switches within these letters have been assigned to six different functional categories: 'Description'; 'GCS' (involving the sub-category 'Literature/Rhetoric/Grammar'); 'Metalinguistic'; 'Quotation' (both examples are literary quotations, one from Homer and one unknown); 'Referential' and 'Wordplay'. Even this small corpus therefore shows Augustus using Greek in a range of ways familiar from our other epistolographers.⁹⁸ Of these, the category of 'Description' is dominant: the eleven switches in this category account for just under half of the total switches in Augustus' letters. Six of these descriptive switches, however, appear in the series of letters between Livia and Augustus discussing Claudius, and they provide a useful case study for the way in which the content and immediate function of code-switches can interact with higher-level functions (see below pp. 264–8).

The corpus sheds light on Augustus' personal and political relationships, and how code-switching worked in the performance and negotiation of these. Through the fragments, we gain insights into his epistolary relationships with some significant literary and political figures and members of the imperial family. Some of the glimpses that we gain of Augustus' relationships are extremely brief (his relationship with Horace

⁹⁷ *Cl.* 4.1–6 (letters to Livia about Claudius); *Tib.* 21.4–7 (main sequence of letters to Tiberius); *Poet. Vir.* 31 (letter to Virgil); *Poet. Hor.* (contains two Greek code-switches to Horace); *Aug.* 71.2–4 and 92.2 (further fragments of letters to Tiberius); *Aug.* 87.2 (list of Augustus' epistolary peculiarities).

⁹⁸ Dubuisson 2002 also notes the striking similarity between Augustus' and Cicero's use of Greek in the letters.

for example), but we are able to look into Augustus' epistolary relationships with Tiberius and Livia in more detail. The code-switching within these letters sheds light on some of the historical circumstances and debates surrounding these relationships. Read alongside the other Suetonian evidence, the Greek is also revealing of the limitations and opportunities of the epistolary genre, discussed across this chapter and the volume as a whole, and the use that both Augustus and Suetonius make of these.

Tiberius iucundissimus

The cited letters from Augustus to Tiberius contain six instances of code-switching in total, four of which appear in a concentrated sequence of extracts from letters used by Suetonius to prove Augustus' goodwill towards Tiberius at *Tiberius* 21.⁹⁹ Of the six code-switches, we have categorized three as descriptions, two as literary quotations and one as wordplay. The categories of code-switching within these letters therefore mirror those seen within elite epistolary exchanges across this volume, but this type of engagement with Greek is, as we have seen, distinct from Augustus' and, especially, Tiberius' language practices reported elsewhere in Suetonius. Their hesitating, restricted or even hostile attitude to Greek in other contexts and anecdotes in Suetonius' narrative is absent and, rather than being a source of comment or concern, Greek is employed, seemingly casually, to highlight and explain the points under discussion. Augustus' almost throwaway use of the Greek word *geronticos* to describe his gambling to Tiberius (*inter cenam lusimus geronticos et heri et hodie* (*Aug.* 71.2); 'We gambled like old men both yesterday and today'), for example, contrasts with Tiberius' reluctance to sanction even a single Greek word in the context of the Senate (*Tib.* 71, discussed pp. 223–5).

The Greek language of these letters does, however, tie in with anecdotes about Tiberius' linguistic practice in other authors.

⁹⁹ Dubuisson 2002: 157–8 briefly comments on the role of Greek here in demonstrating Augustus' 'paternalistic' attitude towards Tiberius.

Tacitus, for example, describes Tiberius' habit of quoting a line of Greek upon leaving the Senate:

memoriae proditur Tiberium, quoties curia egrederetur, Graecis uerbis in hunc modum eloqui solitum: "O homines ad seruitutem paratos!" (TAC. Ann. 3.65.3)

Tradition holds that, whenever he left the Senate House, Tiberius was accustomed to say the following in Greek: 'O these men who are ready for servitude!'

These variations in linguistic behaviour underline the importance of context in determining the appropriateness of Greek. They are also a reminder that the language of letters is closer to the conversational, private language outside the Senate than it is to the more formal, public language within it. As we have stressed throughout this volume, however, there is not a binary divide: like Tiberius' comments on the threshold of the Senate, the letters sit between public and private spheres. This is reflected in the way that Suetonius positions the letters between Augustus and Tiberius in relation to other evidence for their relationship:

et statim ex itinere reuocatus iam quidem adfectum sed tamen spirantem adhuc Augustum reperit fuitque una secreto per totum diem. scio uulgo persuasum quasi egresso post secretum sermonem Tiberio uox Augusti per cubicularios excepta sit, "miserum populum R., qui sub tam lentis maxillis erit." ne illud quidem ignoro aliquos tradidisse Augustum palam nec dissimulanter morum eius diritatem adeo improbasse ut nonnumquam remissiores hilarioresque sermones superueniente eo abrumperet ... sed uitiiis Tiberi uirtutibusque perpensis potiores duxisse uirtutes, praesertim cum et rei p. causa adoptare se eum pro contione iurauerit et epistulis aliquot ut peritissimum rei militaris utque unicum p. R. praesidium prosequatur. ex quibus in exemplum pauca hinc inde subieci. (Tib. 21.1–3)

But [Tiberius] was at once recalled, and finding Augustus in his last illness but still alive, he spent an entire day with him in private. I know that it is commonly believed, that when Tiberius left the room after this confidential talk, Augustus was overheard by his chamberlains to say: "Alas for the Roman people, to be ground by jaws that crunch so slowly!" I also am aware that some have written that Augustus so openly and unreservedly disapproved of his austere manners, that he sometimes broke off his freer and lighter conversation when Tiberius appeared ... But [it is my opinion that] after weighing the faults and the merits of Tiberius, he decided that the latter preponderated, especially since he took an oath before the people that he was adopting Tiberius for the good of the country, and alludes to him in several letters as a most able general and the sole

defence of the Roman people. In illustration of both these points, I append a few extracts from these letters.

On the one hand, the evidence of the letters is distinct from the public and open evidence of a *contio* with which they are paralleled, and from the disapproval that Augustus is said to have shown *palam* ('openly') and *nec dissimulanter* ('without pretence'). On the other hand, the evidence of the letters is of a different sort again from the discussion held between Augustus and Tiberius in person just before Augustus' death. This meeting is twice described explicitly as *secretum* ('secret') and Augustus' reaction to it is overheard by slaves (*per cubicularios excepta sit*), rather than expressed publicly. As a category, letters sit between these extremes of public and private, and this balance between the two is maintained in the letters between Augustus and Tiberius, as Birch emphasizes.¹⁰⁰ These letters are about more than Augustus' personal opinions and attitudes towards Tiberius; they also have an important role to play in the public affairs of the Roman state. Code-switching helps to achieve this balance: it functions both as a marker of private and relaxed space, and as a means of negotiating complex political issues.¹⁰¹

Augustus' epistolary code-switching demands a bilingual awareness from both reader and writer. The best example of this is the bilingual wordplay at *Aug.* 92.2:

obseruabat et dies quosdam, ne aut postridie mundinas quoquam proficisceretur aut Nonis quicquam rei seriae incoharet, nihil in hoc quidem aliud deuotans, ut ad Tiberium scribit, quam δυσσημίαν *nominis.*

He also had regard to certain days, refusing ever to begin a journey on the day after a market day, or to take up any important business on the *Nonis*; though in the latter case, as he writes to Tiberius, he merely dreaded the unlucky sound of the name.

The wordplay here is not straightforward, and is perhaps further obscured by the way in which Suetonius has framed

¹⁰⁰ Birch 1981, especially 159.

¹⁰¹ This function of code-switching was also discussed in [Chapter 3](#).

it within the text, with few clues as to how it appeared originally within Augustus' letter. Augustus is making the point that the *Nones* is a potentially unlucky day because of its similarity in sound to the Latin phrase *non est* ('it is not').¹⁰² It is, however, the Greek δυσφημίαν, meaning 'unlucky sound', that highlights this, and flags to the reader the need to think again about the Latin.

The potential markedness of Greek, given Suetonius' commentary on the actors' Greek elsewhere, and the fact that both author and reader are attuned to this, mean that it can carry important and subtle meanings, both within the cited letters and in relation to the rest of Suetonius' text. The Greek is used in higher-level functions to particular effect in the sequence of letters at *Tiberius* 21. As Birch argues, in his close analysis of these letter fragments and the reconstruction of their historical context, they have 'a much more substantial character than the conventional interpretation allows'.¹⁰³

'uale, iucundissime Tiberi, et feliciter rem gere, ἔμοι καὶ ταῖς Μούσαις στρατηγῶν. iucundissime et, ita sim felix, vir fortissime et dux νομιμώτατε, uale.' 5. *'ordinem aestiuorum tuorum ego uero <laudo>, mi Tiberi, et inter tot rerum difficultates καὶ τοσαύτην ἀποθυμίαν τῶν στρατευομένων non potuisse quemquam prudentius gerere se quam tu gesseris existimo. ii quoque qui tecum fuerunt omnes confitentur uersum illum in te posse dici, unus homo nobis uigilando restituit rem.'* 6. *'siue quid incidit de quo sit cogitandum diligentius siue quid stomachor, ualde medius Fidius Tiberium meum desidero succurritque uersus ille Homericus: τούτου γ' ἔσπομένοιο καὶ ἐκ πυρός αἰθομένοιο / ἄμφω νοστήσαιμεν, ἐπεὶ περίοιδε νοῆσαι.'* (*Tib.* 21.4–7)

'Fare thee well, Tiberius, most charming of men, and success go with you, as you war for me and for the Muses. Fare thee well, most charming and valiant of men and most conscientious of generals, or may I never know happiness.' 5. 'I have only praise for the conduct of your summer campaigns, dear Tiberius, and I am sure that no one could have acted with better judgment than you did amid so many difficulties and such apathy of your army. All who were with you agree that the well-known line could be applied to you: *One man alone by his*

¹⁰² Wardle 2014: 506 points out the similarity between '*Nones*' and the phrase '*non est*'. Following Dubuisson 2002: 158–9, he argues that Greek is used here for stylistic reasons: 'Greek's lexical richness here permitted an economy impossible in Latin'. He dismisses as unlikely the view of De Biasi and Ferrero 2003: 256 that the Greek is deployed out of a desire to avoid unlucky words in Latin.

¹⁰³ Birch 1981: 159.

foresight has saved our dear country from ruin.' 6. 'If anything comes up that calls for careful thought, or if I am vexed at anything, I long mightily, so help me Heaven, for my dear Tiberius, and the lines of Homer come to my mind: *If he but follow me, then we too, though flames round about us be raging, may both return to our homes, since great are his wisdom and knowledge.*'

Suetonius uses the letters both to prove Augustus' favourable view of Tiberius in general, and more specifically to illustrate that Augustus believed Tiberius to be *peritissimum rei militaris utque unicum p. R. praesidium* 'a most skilled general and the sole protection of the Roman people' (21.3). In order to highlight these points, Suetonius integrates his framing of the selected letters with Augustus' own language within them. In both the Latin and the Greek of the letters, Augustus' language is notably friendly. In the first extract (21.4) alone, Tiberius is described with a sequence of four superlatives: the repeated *iucundissime* 'most charming', followed by *fortissime* 'bravest' and νομιμώτατε 'most legitimate'.¹⁰⁴ Augustus switches into Greek to describe Tiberius' military skill and significance, precisely those points that Suetonius has picked out in his introduction to the letters. Augustus wishes Tiberius well, ἐμοὶ καὶ ταῖς Μούσαις στρατηγῶν 'as you war for me and the Muses', and describes him as a *dux* νομιμώτατε 'most legitimate leader'. In the context of Suetonius' text then, the Greek has the effect of reinforcing Augustus' good opinion of Tiberius, particularly in the military sphere that both Suetonius and Augustus stress.

This effect of the Greek was also there, albeit more subtly, in the original context of the letters. The two quotations (ἐμοὶ καὶ ταῖς Μούσαις στρατηγῶν and the Homeric quotation τούτου γ' ἔσπομένοιο καὶ ἐκ πυρὸς αἰθομένοιο/Ἄμφω νοστήσαιμεν, ἐπεὶ περίοιδε νοῆσαι) provide the best evidence for this. Birch dismisses the Homeric quotation as being 'without any ulterior significance',¹⁰⁵ but a closer reading of it, with knowledge of its original context, demonstrates its force. It comes from Book

¹⁰⁴ On the use of superlatives and expressions of friendship in elite Roman correspondence, see Williams 2012: 227–8 and Chapter 3 pp. 157, 160.

¹⁰⁵ Birch 1981: 161.

10 of the *Iliad*; the two lines are spoken by Diomedes after he chooses Odysseus as his companion to enter the Trojan camp (*Il.* 10.246–7). They are therefore pertinent to Augustus’ choice of Tiberius as his successor and confidant. A comparison with Odysseus is undeniably flattering, and draws attention to the value and wisdom of Tiberius’ counsel to Augustus.¹⁰⁶

The textual problems of the (probable) quotation at 21.4 have caused numerous debates amongst editors, but once these difficulties are unravelled, this quotation can again be seen to underline Augustus’ confidence in Tiberius.¹⁰⁷ Birch’s reading of ἐμοὶ καὶ ταῖς ἑμαῖς σαῖς τε στρατηγῶν (‘warring for me and for my womenfolk who are also yours’), removing any references to the Muses, is ingenious; he uses it to argue that the Greek strengthened the ties between them by recalling their marriage links.¹⁰⁸ Powell’s reading of ἐμοὶ καὶ ταῖς Μοῦσαις στρατηγῶν is, however, simpler and matches with a known quotation, according to Powell adapted from one by Antigenidas and reported by Cicero in Latin.¹⁰⁹ The presence of the Muses is not odd or out of place as Birch suggests:¹¹⁰ as numerous instances of code-switching across this volume have shown, the language of the Greek cultural and literary sphere frequently had a place in political discussions (see [Chapter 3](#)). The original context of the quotation, as reported by Cicero, adds a further dimension to the relationship acknowledged here. Antigenidas initially used the quotation in his encouragement of a pupil who had failed to impress in public: instead of worrying about the public reaction, he was advised to ‘sing for

¹⁰⁶ It is interesting that Cicero twice deploys a quotation from this same episode of the *Iliad*: he quotes the first words of 10.224 both to Varro at *Fam.* 1x.7.1 and to Atticus at *Att.* 1x.6.6 (for a discussion of the Varro passage, see the discussion in [Chapter 3](#), pp. 150–1). This suggests that this episode was perhaps a shared currency/cultural reference in demonstrating friendship, but at the same time underlines the extent of elite Romans’ engagement with the text of the *Iliad*: their knowledge of it was not so formulaic that they all chose the same lines.

¹⁰⁷ Birch 1981 and Powell 1990 both reference a number of different readings of the text. For another reading, see Rollo 2019: 613–14.

¹⁰⁸ Birch 1981: 155, 158–9.

¹⁰⁹ Powell’s reading is accepted by Kaster in his commentary on the OCT edition of the text of *De vita Caesarum* (Kaster 2016b: 135–6). A Latin version of the quotation appears at *Cic.* *Brut.* 187: *mihi cane et Musis*, see Powell 1990: 580.

¹¹⁰ Birch 1981: 156.

me [his master Antigenidas] and the Muses'. In recalling this quotation here, Powell argues, Augustus presents himself and Tiberius as master and pupil, and expresses his own confidence in Tiberius, even in the face of doubt from others.¹¹¹ If this interpretation is accepted, the level of close reading required fully to understand the significance of the Greek stresses again the acuity of the two men's engagement with Greek and its cultural sphere.

Birch's reading of the language of these letters in light of his reconstruction of their historical context demonstrates that they, and the instances of Greek within them, are more than just straightforward proof of Augustus' trust in Tiberius. They are used to draw out the severity of the current situation and therefore carry 'great political significance'.¹¹² Birch dates the letters at 21.5 and 21.6 to periods after major army revolts and unrest.¹¹³ Without referring to dates or events specifically, Augustus' Greek highlights how much is at stake: it is used to describe the great apathy of the army (τοσαύτην ἀποθυμίαν τῶν στρατευομένων). Similarly, the Homeric quotation at 21.6, with its dramatic reference to raging flames, demonstrates the critical nature of the situation. Birch, in contrast, argues that these descriptions are put into Greek out of a desire to conceal the seriousness of the situation from prying eyes.¹¹⁴ It, however, seems difficult to sustain the view that Greek had the genuine function of coding or concealment here,¹¹⁵ particularly given the fact that Greek appears regularly in Suetonius as a language of popular criticism (a point discussed in more detail below in reference to the letters between Augustus and Livia). Instead, as we saw in [Chapter 3](#), 'confidential' language patterns are used to create an atmosphere of familiarity in these letters.

¹¹¹ Powell 1990: 580.

¹¹² Birch 1981: 161.

¹¹³ Birch 1981: 160–1: he dates 21.5 tentatively to the period in AD 5 following a pay dispute amongst the Praetorian Guard and 21.6 to the period following the Pannonian revolt or the Varian disaster in AD 9.

¹¹⁴ Birch 1981: 161.

¹¹⁵ See the discussion [Chapter 3](#) pp. 152–3. Augustus had, moreover, developed a cipher that he deployed when he needed to keep messages secret (*Aug.* 88): the fact that this option was available makes the use of Greek for the purposes of coding even less plausible.

Despite the fact that immediately preceding the quotations from the letters (21.1–3) Suetonius alerts us to the possibility of tension between the two men in a long narrative passage describing rumours of Augustus' doubts about Tiberius, the letters do not corroborate this. As we have seen, Augustus goes out of his way to prove the close links between himself and Tiberius in the Greek and beyond, and there is no obvious underlying edge to this as there is, for example, in Cicero's letters to Appius Claudius (see [Chapter 3](#) pp. 154–8). The only possible hint that their relationship has been anything other than close and trusting comes in the use of the word νομιμώτατε. As Birch points out, the choice of this adjective emphasizes Tiberius' completely lawful status at the point that this letter is written, but in doing so implicitly recalls an earlier period, when Augustus had prevented Tiberius from returning to Rome and demanded that he remain on Rhodes *contra uoluntatem* 'against his will'.¹¹⁶ The pointedness of this word is increased if Birch's dating of the letter fragment to AD 4, the same year as Tiberius' rehabilitation and adoption, is accepted. Read in this context, Augustus' assurances of his affection for and trust in Tiberius take on a potentially different dimension: the letters are a means of displaying and constructing his relationship with Tiberius rather than straightforward proofs of it.

Ah, Claudius

The letters from Augustus to his wife Livia (*Cl.* 4.1–6), in which Claudius' deficiencies are described and a strategy for how to deal with them is discussed, present further evidence for Augustus' use of epistolary code-switching in articulating his opinion on a critical matter. This evidence again demonstrates how code-switching works on the boundaries between public and private concerns, being both a marker of private space and enabling discussion of bigger issues concerning the *res publica* and the *populus Romanus*. These letters are also an interesting

¹¹⁶ Birch [1981](#): 158; *Tib.* 12.1.

case study for how immediate functions or content of the code-switches relate to higher-level functions.

There are eleven Greek code-switches in *Claudius* 4–6; this short passage on a single theme therefore includes nearly half of the total evidence for Augustus' epistolary code-switching cited by Suetonius. The use of Greek in this set of letters has, however, hitherto received relatively little attention: it has not been subjected to the same type of historical analysis undertaken by Birch on *Tiberius* 21.4–7.¹¹⁷ A more detailed reading of this passage, particularly in light of other pieces of evidence from Suetonius, reveals that there are other possible explanations for and insights into its code-switching than have previously been considered.

One focus in previous scholarship has been on what the passage suggests about the relationship between code-switching and gender.¹¹⁸ It provides the only extended series of code-switches to a female addressee within our corpora.¹¹⁹ Both Wenskus and Adams use the passage to demonstrate the insignificance of gender as a factor in the choice to use code-switching.¹²⁰ Our analysis of the different types of code-switching in this passage reinforces their arguments: precisely the same subtleties and hierarchies of types and functions of code-switching are seen here as in letters between male correspondents. In turn, this also indicates that the nature of the epistolary relationship between Livia and Augustus is directly comparable to that of other elite political actors.¹²¹

¹¹⁷ Adams 2003a: 331–2 and 416; Birch 1981: 161; Dubuisson 2002: 155–7; Wenskus 1998: 32 comment briefly on the detail of the code-switching in these letters.

¹¹⁸ On this topic, see Adams 2003a: 416 and Wenskus 2001. Generally the research on this is limited, restricted by the paucity of evidence.

¹¹⁹ Cicero uses only a single Greek code-switch to his wife Terentia, to describe himself throwing up bile (*Fam.* 14.7.1). On the absence of code-switching to Pliny's female addressees, and its insignificance, see Wenskus 1998: 36–7. None of the code-switching in Fronto's correspondence is in letters to women, though two extant letters by Fronto are written entirely in Greek to Domitia Lucilla (see Chapter 4).

¹²⁰ Adams 2003a: 416.

¹²¹ In its comparability to other 'political' relationships, this series of letters between a married couple also forms an interesting case study for the problematic concept of 'intimacy' with which we have been wrestling across this volume (see especially Chapter 3). It reinforces the argument that there is no direct equivalence between patterns and types of code-switching and the 'intimacy' of a particular epistolary relationship.

Hitherto, the sole explanation given for the code-switching in these letters has been that it enables Augustus to describe the problem of Claudius tactfully and euphemistically, and therefore to ‘distance’ it.¹²² It is certainly the case that in these passages, Claudius’ physical and mental shortcomings, and the potential for popular criticism of them, are described in Greek (the bold in the translation below highlights this):

sin autem ἡλαττώσθαι *sentimus eum et* βεβλάφθαι καὶ εἰς τὴν τοῦ σώματος καὶ εἰς τὴν τῆς ψυχῆς ἀρτιότητα, *praebenda materia deridendi et illum et nos non est hominibus* τὰ τοιαῦτα σκώπτειν καὶ μυκτηρίζειν εἰωθόσιν. (Cl. 4.2)

But if we realize that he is **wanting** and **defective in soundness of body and mind**, we must not furnish the means of ridiculing both him and us to a public **which is wont to scoff at and deride such things**.

qui uellem diligentius et minus μετεώρως *deligeret sibi aliquem cuius motum et habitum et incesum imitaretur. misellus* ἔτυχεῖ (Cl. 4.5)

I do wish that he would choose more carefully and in a less **scatterbrained** fashion someone to imitate in his movements, bearing, and gait. The poor fellow **is unlucky**.

There is, however, a different way of looking at the Greek. It is significant that the code-switching in these passages is used to describe Claudius’ positive as well as negative qualities:

ubi non aberrauit eius animus, satis apparet ἡ τῆς ψυχῆς αὐτοῦ εὐγένεια. (Cl. 4.5)

Where his mind does not wander, **the nobility of his character** is apparent enough.

A straightforward ‘distancing’ explanation seems difficult to justify: the ‘distancing’ here is of a different sort from tact or euphemism.¹²³ Our attempt to categorize the content and function of the Greek in this sequence of letters suggests a different solution, and shows how the content and function of code-switches can interact. ‘GCS: Medicine’ is not given as the primary type of any of the code-switches in this passage: all

¹²² This ‘distancing’ explanation is given by Adams 2003a: 331–2; Birch 1981: 161; Cugusi 1983: 85; Wenskus 1995: 175; 1998: 32.

¹²³ As Adams 2003a: 330–5 points out, there is a distinction between the use of Greek for ‘euphemism’, ‘distancing’ and ‘tact’. He does not, however, apply these distinctions to this passage.

are more appropriately described as examples of 'Description', 'Referential' or 'Metalinguistic' code-switching in the context of the text. The connection with medicine, however, is crucial throughout this sequence of code-switches and helps to explain the choice and higher-level function of Greek here. As the expected language for medical discussion and diagnosis, Greek provided Augustus with the vocabulary to explain and reason through Claudius' problems in measured terms. The code-switching here is therefore far more similar to Cicero's use of Greek philosophical vocabulary to weigh up problems and work through solutions than it is to his use of (medical) Greek to explain delicately to Terentia about vomiting up bile (*Fam.* XIV.7.1).¹²⁴ The use of Greek at *Cl.* 4.1 to describe hypothetical scenarios (*nam si est artios* $\leq et \geq$, *ut ita dicam, holocleros* 'for if he is **perfect** and, one might say, **completely sound**') also fits neatly into this interpretation.

The role of Greek in providing a framework and vocabulary for measured discussion relies on it being an expected and unmarked choice. It is, however, difficult to argue that the Greek is entirely neutral, as shown by the fact that the danger of *μὴ προὔποκειμένου ἡμῖν* 'not making our minds up in advance', surely one of the main points that Livia is supposed to take from the letter, is also written in Greek (*Cl.* 4.2). If anything, the Greek here sets this point apart from the rest of the sentence and serves to contrast it with the way in which the problem of Claudius is currently (not) being dealt with.

Read in the broader context of Suetonius' text, the markedness of the Greek might be further increased, and the effect of it in highlighting rather than distancing Claudius' deficiencies and Augustus' dilemma over them is strengthened. The aspects of these letters that Suetonius picks out in his introduction to them – the evidence *in utram partem* 'on both sides' of the argument for Augustus' attitude to Claudius (*Cl.* 3.2) – are precisely those that are emphasized by the code-switching: as we have seen, both Claudius' positive and negative qualities appear

¹²⁴ See Chapter 3 and Griffin 1995 on Cicero and others' use of technical and philosophical language in their discussion of problems.

in Greek. The use of the parallel Greek adverbs to describe Claudius' contradictory manner of speaking at *Claudius* 4.6 (ἄσφαδῶς and σφαδῶς) reinforces this balancing. Even more significantly, later in the *Life*, Suetonius pointedly cites the Greek words characterizing the popular criticism of Claudius:

inter cetera in eo mirati sunt homines et obliuionem et inconsiderantiam, uel ut Graece dicam, μετεωρίαν et ἀβλεψίαν. (Cl. 39.1)

Among other things men have marvelled at his absent-mindedness and blindness, or to use the Greek terms, his μετεωρία and ἀβλεψία.

The word μετεωρία directly mirrors the language of Augustus' letters to Livia: *qui uellem diligentius et minus μετεώρως deligeret* 'I do wish that he would choose more carefully and in a less scatterbrained fashion' (*Cl.* 4.5). Suetonius therefore ties Augustus' epistolary Greek directly to the language of popular criticism of Claudius and any sense in which the problem may have been distanced by the use of Greek is lost. This effect is further magnified by the oddity of this code-switch amongst the set of switches in Suetonius' authorial voice: as we noted above, it is unique in having the function of 'Description', which here mirrors the function of μετεώρως in Augustus' letters, and is one of just a handful of code-switches to be flagged. Moreover, the possibility of popular criticism is itself expressed in Greek in the letters: Augustus describes Claudius' potential ridicule at the hands of *hominibus* τὰ τοιαῦτα σκώπτειν καὶ μυκτηριῖζειν εἰωθόσιν 'men who are accustomed to scoff at and deride such things' (*Cl.* 4.2).

Conclusion

This last discussion exemplifies the interplay of different types and layers of Greek within Suetonius' text that this chapter has drawn out. At one level, Suetonius provides us with a series of individual sets of evidence for code-switching that can be sliced in different ways: amongst others, we can isolate and examine instances of emperors' Greek, Greek in oral contexts, and epistolary Greek. As well as being considered in isolation, these sets of evidence can simultaneously be considered

Conclusion

in relation to one another and to the text in which they are embedded. This text itself engages with the sociolinguistic themes and concerns of this volume via commentary, anecdote and authorial practice.

A reading of epistolary code-switching against this background has consequences for our understanding of the language of letters, both those cited by Suetonius and those across this volume. It first illustrates the ambiguity and flexibility of letters as a category: comparison with other sets of evidence with which letters overlap shows that the language of letters operates on a series of continua between oral and written, public and private, formal and informal, individual and societal preferences. Suetonius also demonstrates some of the parameters of these continua: Greek in the letters is in some ways distinct from the snatches of the Greek from the streets of Rome that Suetonius records, and its patterns are shaped by the purposes of persuasion, negotiation and articulation of relationships to which letters are put. The distinctiveness of letters is most obvious in the case of Augustus, whose epistolary language can be compared and contrasted with his linguistic behaviour in other contexts: Suetonius himself plays up these contradictions in his commentary.

Suetonius' text also has consequences for our understanding of letters as historical documents. As we have discussed, the authenticity of the letters that Suetonius cites is not the issue here per se – whether they were in fact Augustus' letters or not, readers were meant to assume that they were, or could have been. As a result of Suetonius' alertness to epistolary language and careful selection and framing, he is able to use epistolary extracts to shape our interpretations of the characters in his *Lives*. This should encourage us to acknowledge the impact that the editing and selection of letters can have on our understanding of their authors, language and historical context, even where the motivations for this selection and/or editing are less explicit.

Above all, Suetonius integrates the language of the letters into the broader debates about language occurring in and across the periods that he depicts in the *Lives*. Frequently, these are precisely the debates that we ourselves have been having

within this volume: about the means and extent of integration of particular words, about linguistic authority and about the acceptability of Greek within Roman discourse. Suetonius' take on these debates may ultimately be his own, and may at least partly reflect the Hadrianic period in which he writes. Nevertheless, because of the range of voices and sources that are incorporated into his text, Suetonius offers a more multifaceted view than we get from the other texts considered in this volume. Suetonius casts light not only on the language of letters, but on the language of Roman politics, culture and society out of which they are woven.

CHAPTER 6

WEAVING TOGETHER THE THREADS: EPISTOLARY CONNECTIONS

In a letter to Suetonius, written in AD 98 before Suetonius had embarked on a career in the imperial administration, Pliny dissects Suetonius' fears about an upcoming lawsuit in which Pliny is due to act on the younger man's behalf. Suetonius has apparently previously written to Pliny to tell him of a dream and to request that Pliny try to adjourn the case: *scribis te perterritum somnio uereri ne quid aduersi in actione patiaris; rogas ut dilationem petam pauculos dies, certe proximum, excusem* 'you write that a troubling dream has caused you to fear that the upcoming case may go against you; you ask me to seek a postponement and to try to put it off for a few days, or for one day at least'.¹ In his reply, which is 'not as innocent as it appears at first sight',² Pliny sympathises but also makes clear that his own preference is to keep to the original schedule for the trial.³ As part of his argumentation, Pliny deploys a series of three Greek code-switches – one descriptive switch and two Homeric quotations, one of which is also used by Cicero. This letter highlights the direct and indirect personal, linguistic and cultural connections between the authors considered in this volume and draws out several of the themes that have been important to our study of the Greek in their letters.

scribis te perterritum somnio uereri ne quid aduersi in actione patiaris; rogas ut dilationem petam, et pauculos dies, certe proximum, excusem. difficile est, sed experiar, καὶ γὰρ τ' ὄναρ ἐκ Διὸς ἔστιν. refert tamen, euentura soleas an contraria

¹ Translations in this chapter are those of the author unless otherwise specified.

² Winsbury 2014: 180.

³ For a detailed literary commentary on this letter and its argumentation, see Schenk 2016.

Weaving Together the Threads

somniare. mihi reputanti somnium meum istud, quod times tu, egregiam actionem portendere uidetur. susceperam causam Iuni Pastoris, cum mihi quiescenti uisa est socrus mea aduoluta genibus ne agerem obsecrare; et eram acturus adulescentulus adhuc, eram in quadruplici iudicio, eram contra potentissimos ciuitatis atque etiam Caesaris amicos, quae singula excutere mentem mihi post tam triste somnium poterant. egi tamen λογισάμενος illud εἰς οἰωνός ἄριστος ἀμύνεσθαι περὶ πατρὸς. nam mihi patria, et si quid carius patria, fides uidebatur. prospere cessit, atque adeo illa actio mihi aures hominum, illa ianuam famae patefecit. proinde dispice an tu quoque sub hoc exemplo somnium istud in bonum uertas; aut si tutius putas illud cautissimi cuiusque praeceptum ‘quod dubites, ne feceris’, id ipsum rescribe. ego aliquam stropham inueniam agamque causam tuam, ut istam agere tu cum uoles possis. est enim sane alia ratio tua, alia mea fuit. nam iudicium centumuirale differri nullo modo, istuc aegre quidem sed tamen potest. uale. (PLIN. Ep. 1.18)

You write that a troubling dream has caused you to fear that the upcoming case may go against you; you ask me to seek a postponement and to try and put it off for a few days, or for one day at least. It is difficult, but I shall try: ‘for a dream comes from Zeus’. It makes a difference though whether or not your dreams usually foretell events accurately or not. Judging by one of my own dreams, your dream might indicate a favourable outcome. I had undertaken the case of Junius Pastor, when my mother-in-law came to me in a dream, begging me on her knees not to go forward with the case. I was still a young man then and I was about to speak in the Centumviral Court, against the most powerful men in the state, some of whom were friends of the emperor. Each of these things could have swayed my mind after such an upsetting dream. But I nonetheless undertook the case, reasoning that ‘the one best omen is to fight for your fatherland’. For in my case, my good faith seemed to be my fatherland, if anything can be dearer than the fatherland. The case went my way and brought me to men’s attention and opened the door to renown. Therefore, with this example in mind, consider whether you can turn your dream into a positive omen; alternatively, if you think that the warning of every cautious person to ‘do nothing if you are in doubt’ is safer, write back and tell me. I will find some way out of it and arrange it so that you can take your case up when you want. For your situation is certainly different from mine. It is not possible for a case in the Centumviral Court to be put off, but it can be done for your case, though not easily.

This is one of four letters addressed to Suetonius within the Plinian corpus (the others are III.8, V.10 and IX.34).⁴

⁴ Gibson and Morello 2012: 143 n. 32 summarize the number of letters to and about each of Pliny’s correspondents, including Suetonius. On the relationship between Pliny and Suetonius in the letters and beyond, see Gibson 2014; Méthy 2009; Power 2010; Schenk 2016; Wallace-Hadrill 1983: 4–5, 26–38, 162–71; Winsbury 2014: 179–82.

Suetonius is mentioned in another three letters: 1.24 and x.94 from Pliny and x.95 from Trajan, in which the emperor confirms the *ius trium liberorum* that Pliny has requested for his friend.⁵ Between them, these letters display a range of roles possible within ancient *amicitia*. They show the two men engaging both as patron and client – in letters 111.8 and x.94 Pliny tries to secure a series of favours for Suetonius – and as two authors sharing their literary output – in v.10 Pliny requests a copy of Suetonius’ latest work and in ix.34 he asks for his advice about reading his own work aloud. We have shown throughout this volume that Greek was an important means of negotiating different roles (see in particular [Chapters 3 and 4](#)).

These direct connections between Pliny and Suetonius should have a bearing on how we read the language of their letters. This is illustrated by two passages, the first in a letter from Pliny to Suetonius in which Pliny begs Suetonius to publish his almost-finished work, probably *De uiris illustribus*, and the second in a letter from Augustus to Virgil, cited by Suetonius, in which the emperor requests a copy of the *Aeneid*:

proinde aut rumpe iam moras aut caue ne eosdem istos libellos, quos tibi hendecasyllabi nostri blanditiis elicere non possunt, conuicio scazontes extorqueant. (PLIN. Ep. v.10.2)

Then hurry up or watch out in case my scazons, screaming, drag those books of yours out, since my hendecasyllables couldn’t coax them out with flattery.

supplicibus atque etiam minacibus per iocum litteris efflagitarat, ut ‘sibi de “Aeneide,”’ ut ipsius uerba sunt, ‘uel prima carminis ὑπογραφή uel quodlibet κῶλον mitteretur’. (SUET. Poet. Vir. 32)

⁵ The *ius trium liberorum* (‘the right of three children’) was a legal privilege granted to Roman citizens with three or more children; see Sherwin-White 1966: 558. In letter x.94, however, Pliny requests this privilege on behalf of the childless Suetonius. Power 2010: 158 shows that there was a precedent for granting this privilege to literary figures after publications, giving the example of Martial as evidenced in MART. 2.92. He argues that this privilege was granted to Suetonius in AD 110 following the partial or full publication of *De uiris illustribus*. This publication date is earlier than that usually assumed, and Power argues that it means that Suetonius could have been working on the *Lives* earlier than is commonly argued. For further discussion of the chronology of Suetonius’ works see [Chapter 5](#).

[Augustus] demanded in pleading and even jokingly threatening letters that [Virgil] send him ‘something from the *Aeneid*’; to use his own words, ‘either the first draft of the poem or any section of it that he liked’. (trans. Rolfe)

Pliny’s letter to Suetonius has echoes of the letter from Augustus to Virgil.⁶ It shares its ‘jokingly threatening’ tone, and, like Augustus, he uses Greek literary terminology to illustrate his requests: *hendecasyllabi* and *scazontes* appear in Pliny’s letter and ὑπογραφή and κῶλον in Augustus’ letter. If the influence has been correctly identified, its direction is difficult to determine: Pliny had obviously read a draft of *De uiris illustribus* and could have used the style of Augustus’ letter as inspiration, but equally Suetonius could have had Pliny’s letter in mind when choosing how to frame Augustus’ letter to Virgil within his text. Either way, the passages remind us that epistolary practices were shaped and influenced by the precedent of other authors, even as they acquired distinct patterns over time and within particular collections (Chapter 2). Across our authors, Cicero plays a particularly important role in setting the tone for epistolary code-switching.

Cicero’s influence on Pliny and his language is apparent from letter 1.18.⁷ Pliny draws an implicit parallel between his own debut in the courts as a young man and Cicero’s first speech in *Pro Roscio Amerino*.⁸ Pliny also quotes directly from Cicero’s *De Officiis* – the not-quite-letter that we suggested had strong links to the epistolary genre (Chapter 1). Pliny’s adoption of Cicero’s epistolary practice is more explicit in his deployment of the Homeric quotation εἰς οἶωνός ἄριστος ἀμύνεσθαι περὶ πατρὸς ‘the one best omen is to fight for your fatherland’ (*Iliad* 12.243). This is one of two Homeric quotations to appear in both Cicero’s and Pliny’s letters.⁹ Schenk sees a ‘double allusion’ in

⁶ Power 2010: 153 also comments on the allusions across these passages.

⁷ On the allusions to Cicero’s letters in Pliny, see Hoffer 1999: 211–25; Lefèvre 1996; Marchesi 2008: 218–32 and 218–21; on the allusions via Greek in particular; Schenk 2016: 346.

⁸ Schenk 2016: 343, 345.

⁹ The other is *Od.* XXII.412, the first three words of which are quoted at CIC. *Att.* IV.7.2 and PLIN. *Ep.* IX.1.4 (οὐχ ὅση φθιμένοισιν). It is interesting to note that Cicero alters the quotation from the original: Homer’s text reads οὐχ ὅση κταμένοισιν ἐπ’ ἀνδράσιν εὐχετάσθαι (‘it is unholy to boast over slain men’), whereas Cicero changes the verb to φθιμένοισι (‘destroyed’ or ‘decayed’). Pliny quotes Cicero’s adapted version, underlining the influence of Cicero’s language on his letters.

Pliny's use of this quotation here, arguing that Pliny is recalling both its original context and Cicero's usage of it in a letter to Atticus written in December 60 (II.3.4).¹⁰ In this letter, Cicero is trying to decide between giving his assent to Caesar's agrarian bill – and thus ensuring his own political security – or resisting it. The Homeric quotation accompanies his resolve to move against the bill for the sake of the *res publica*. Pliny has, however, altered the meaning of the quotation from that in Cicero and in Homer: in the commentary following it, he places *fides* on a parallel with *patria* as the crucial issue at stake in making decisions over what action to take (*nam mihi patria, et si quid carius patria, fides uidebatur* 'For in my case, my good faith seemed to be my fatherland, if anything can be dearer than the fatherland'). Schenk argues that this change from the *patria* being at the centre of decision making reflects a development between Republic and Empire: the space for an individual to act independently in the name of the *res publica* has been reduced since the time of Cicero.¹¹ This is a reminder of the political changes that take place across the time-frame of this volume, and against which the similarities and developments of epistolary code-switching can be read.

Such direct intertextuality is relatively rare across our epistolary corpora. Although literary quotations play an important role across the letters – in total, they account for around 16 per cent of the code-switching across the epistolary corpora – the repetition of the same quotations across authors is limited.¹² What is striking is rather the range of the practice, with only two authors (Homer and Euripides) cited in all four epistolary collections (Chapter 2). As a result, and given later authors' knowledge of the earlier epistolary tradition, when quotations are reused as in letter I.18, we can expect this to have been intended and noticed. Suetonius' familiarity with Cicero's

¹⁰ Schenk 2016: 346.

¹¹ Schenk 2016: 347–8.

¹² This percentage was reached by dividing the total number of literary quotations in all four epistolary corpora (221) by the total number of code-switches (1,400).

epistolary style and use of Greek language and literature is evidenced by his use of Cicero's letters in his own biographies.¹³

The Greek in letter 1.18 also exemplifies the more indirect links between the language of our authors' letters, and the importance of code-switching in negotiating relationships. In both its content and use of Greek, Pliny's letter to Suetonius recalls that with which we opened the volume (*Att.* 1.1): here again we have a senator writing to an equestrian to let him down gently over a lawsuit.¹⁴ Greek is again deployed as an integral part of the navigation of a potentially awkward situation. As we have seen throughout the volume, literary quotations play an important role: they can be used both to sum up the situation being described and to provide a subtle commentary on it.

In 1.18, the first Homeric quotation (καὶ γὰρ τ' ὄναρ ἐκ Διὸς ἔσθιν 'for a dream comes from Zeus') is used to underline Pliny's support for Suetonius. Schenk argues that the quotation can be understood independently of its context and, although this is true, an understanding of the original context adds weight to the argument it is used to convey.¹⁵ The

¹³ Suetonius for example quotes a snippet of one of Cicero's letters to Atticus at *Gram. et rhet.* 14 (*in cuius epistula ad Dolabellam haec de eo legimus ... 'profert alter, opinor duobus uersiculis, expensum <Nicias>; alter Aristarchus hos ὀβελίζει: ego tamquam criticus antiquus iudicaturus sum, utrum sint τοῦ <ποιητοῦ ἀν παρεμβεβλημένοι>'* 'In a letter of [Cicero's] to Dolabella, we read the following about [Nicias] ... "The one [Vidius] presents a note of payment for Nicias, consisting of two lines I believe. The other [Nicias], like an Aristarchus, marks them with an obelus. I [Cicero], like a critic of old, am to decide whether they are the poet's, or a forgery"). This quotation also demonstrates the influence of the manuscript tradition stressed throughout this volume: part of the Greek phrase that Suetonius quotes from Cicero's letter (τοῦ ποιητοῦ ἀν παρεμβεβλημένοι) was restored from manuscripts of Cicero's letters by the editor Aldus in the sixteenth century. This shows that the connections drawn between our authors and their texts were not restricted to antiquity.

¹⁴ For this aspect of Cicero and Atticus' relationship, see Welch 1996 and for Pliny and Suetonius, see Della Corte 1958; Gibson 2014: 200, 217–27. Gibson argues that this difference in status gives a different focus to Pliny's and Suetonius' writings. Difference in status is key in understanding the relationship at the heart of Fronto's correspondence, see Chapter 4.

¹⁵ Schenk 2016: 344: '[i]solating it from its original context to make a pure sententia, Pliny uses this line as a rhetorically effective close for the introduction; but it also performs an important function for the rest of the letter'.

quotation comes from Book 1 of the *Iliad* (line 63), from a speech by Achilles, in which he stresses his desire to establish the cause of the plague that has befallen the Achaeans. As the subsequent events of the *Iliad* show, these findings are indeed taken seriously, despite the personal loss to Achilles that ensues. Understanding the context then shows how Pliny takes Suetonius' concern to heart even as he is about to undermine it by convincing him to ignore his dream. The original context also strengthens the meaning of the second Homeric quotation in 1.18 (εἷς οἰωνὸς ἄριστος ἀμύνεσθαι περὶ πατρὸς 'the one best omen is to fight for your fatherland'). This line is originally spoken by Hector, as part of a speech in which he encourages Polydamas to ignore the bad omen he has seen and press forward to attack the Greek ships. Importantly, Hector is, as the rest of his speech shows, confident of being in Zeus' favour. Pliny wants to draw a parallel between Hector's position and his own in his legal case: not only must *fides* and *patria* come first, but he can anyway be assured of divine favour. This parallel is meant to add weight to Pliny's argument against Suetonius' request to defer the case. Although the literary quotations in 1.18 add support to the argument, elsewhere in the letters we have seen how literary quotations could be used to undermine the argument. The use of these quotations and their contexts underlines the level of engagement with Greek language and literature required of both readers and writers and the range of purposes to which Greek was put.

Letter 1.18 showcases another important function of Greek across the letters. Pliny switches into Greek to describe the process of making his decision to speak despite his own disturbing dream: he did so λογισάμενος 'having thought it through'. In [Chapters 3](#) and [5](#) we saw both Cicero and Augustus using Greek to reason through and structure difficult problems: Cicero in deciding on the course to take in the Civil War and Augustus in deciding how to deal with Claudius and his shortcomings (pp. 139–42, 266–7). In the self-consciousness of his thought process, expressed via the Greek λογισάμενος, Pliny mirrors Cicero's own language in a letter to Atticus (1x.6A.3), in

Weaving Together the Threads

which Cicero used Greek to describe the way he weighs up the dilemma that he faced:

in his ego me consultationibus exercens et disserens in utramque partem tum Graece tum Latine et abduco parumper animum a molestiis et τὸν προὔργον τι delibero.

Practising myself upon these questions and setting out the arguments on either side, now in Greek now in Latin, I take my mind for a while off my troubles and at the same time ponder matters of relevance. (trans. Shackleton Bailey)

Both this and the literary quotations are a reminder of the intersection between the different levels of function of Greek in the letters: they carry both an immediate function in the text (quotation, description) and higher-level functions that need unravelling with careful commentary. It is necessary to look at the letters from the ‘global’ and the ‘local’ perspective to understand fully the place and patterns of the Greek within them (the distinction between these perspectives is discussed in [Chapter 2](#)).

This letter demonstrates commonalities of our authors’ epistolary language and practice, and of the social, cultural and literary world in which they were operating, despite significant political change. The connections between the authors drawn here underline the importance of understanding their code-switching in relation to one another. These connections have been acknowledged before, but our quantitative analysis makes them easier to see and contextualize on a broader scale.

Codes of Practice: Languages of Roman Culture and Society

Discussions and tensions over what constitutes acceptable language are a crucial shared underlying theme of the letters. Throughout the volume, we have stressed that understanding the code-switching in the letters requires an understanding of attitudes to language in Roman society and culture more broadly. The power of language in managing relationships, structuring communication and constructing Roman identity is recognized explicitly in contemporary commentary. Fronto states that language is an integral part of *imperium*: *imperium autem non potestatis tantummodo uocabulum sed etiam orationis*

est ‘But *imperium* is a term not only of power but also of speech’ (VdH 123.16–17). This quotation is also a reminder of the relationship between the emperor and language explored within this volume. Although it may have been an integral part of the emperor’s power, there was a debate to be had over who determined the definition of effective Roman speech: it could not be left to the emperor alone and grammarians also asserted their rights. The exchanges in [Chapters 4](#) and [5](#) have highlighted both the extent and the limitations of the emperor’s power over language: he both set and was bound by linguistic norms. Additionally, [Chapter 5](#) shows that language, and especially the use of Greek, was a means by which the emperor’s character and behaviour could be mocked or questioned.

The place of Greek in relation to Latin was a particular point of contention in the debate about ideal Roman language. In several literary passages, including a passage by Suetonius (*Gram. et rhet.* 22) and a passage of Aulus Gellius reporting a conversation involving Fronto (*Noctes Att.* xix.13.3), the process of integrating a foreign word into Latin is described via the metaphor of giving it citizenship, tying discussions of language directly into discussions of Roman status and identity. Understanding the place of Greek within these discussions about proper Roman language is crucial to understanding the function and impact of epistolary code-switching. The letters reflect the tension and ambiguity in attitudes to Greek throughout Roman culture. Greek was both superior and inferior, both distinct from and part of Latin, and the precise nature of the integration between the two needed to create ideal Roman communication was a constant focus of debate. [Chapter 4](#) offered evidence of changing attitudes towards the relationship between the two languages. Fronto’s commentary encourages a vision of an ideal Roman language that moves away from the mixture of two languages, as expressed in the phrase *utraque lingua*, to a point where proper Romans have command of two separate languages, perfect Latin (*lingua Romana*) and Attic Greek: these languages are different strands in the cultural tapestry, and they should be combined, but not mixed. This shift in attitude over time was not unanimously followed, however,

even, as [Chapter 4](#) shows, in Fronto's own practice, and debate over the place of Greek remained. As the continuing 'linguistic gymnastics' of Fronto and his correspondents show, the relationship between Latin and Greek remained fluid and context dependent. This fluidity was what made Greek code-switching a consistently powerful rhetorical tool in the letters.

A passage of Horace's *Satires* (1.10.20–30) highlights some of the components of this debate about the mixing of different languages and addresses several themes raised throughout this volume.

*'at magnum fecit, quod uerbis Graeca Latinis miscuit.'
o seri studiorum, quine putetis
difficile et mirum, Rhodio quod Pitholeonti contigit!
'at sermo lingua concinnus utraque
suauior, ut Chio nota si commixta Falerni est'
cum uersus facias, te ipsum percontor, an et cum
dura tibi peragenda rei sit causa Petilli?
scilicet oblitus patriaeque patrisque, Latine
cum Pedius causas exsudet Publicola atque
Coruinus, patriis intermiscere petita
uerba foris malis, Canusini more bilinguis?*

'But it was a great thing that Lucilius mixed Greek and Latin words.'
O late learners, who actually think that what Pitholeon of Rhodes did
was difficult and admirable!

'But a speech blended from both languages is sweeter, just as when
Falernian wine is mixed with Chian.'

Can I ask you if this is the case when you are making verses, or also
when you are engaged in the difficult task of defending Petillius?

Indeed, whilst Pedius Publicola and Corvinus are sweating over cases in
Latin, are you forgetful of father and of fatherland? Do you prefer to
mix words found abroad with ones from our fatherland, bilingual in
the manner of a Canusian?

In this passage, Horace justifies his stylistic criticisms of the second-century BC satirist Lucilius first made in *Satire* 1.4. He takes issue with Lucilius' practice of mixing Greek and Latin words in response to an anonymous admirer of Lucilius, who declares this mixing of languages to be a great thing.¹⁶ Horace's

¹⁶ See also Elder [2018](#): 20–4.

interlocutor presses the point, with the famous quip that mixing languages makes one's style sweeter, just as when the dry Italian Falernian wine is mixed with the sweeter Greek Chian. It is worth unpacking this metaphor: whilst both Falernian and Chian wines were the prime examples of their native types, the Greek Chian, being sweeter, was the most highly prized.¹⁷ This adds an extra weight to the interlocutor's comment: Greek is necessary because it adds something better.¹⁸ Horace rejects this argument, dismissing those who are *bilinguis* and making an unusually explicit statement about the use of Greek undermining Roman values. Being *bilinguis* is presented as being directly at odds with *Latine*, the language of father and fatherland, a point underlined by the threefold repetition of *patriae*, *patris* and *patriis*. Horace's sentiment is reminiscent of Cicero's commentary in *De Officiis* about the mockery of those who *Graeca verba inculcantes* 'force in Greek words' (Chapter 1).

On the surface, it might appear that there is a direct contrast between the language attitudes of Lucilius and Horace. The passage is, however, more equivocal than this. The charge of Horace's criticism is complicated by the fact that Horace is writing satire: this passage forms part of a dialogue running throughout the poem in which Lucilius' merits and demerits are dissected and discussed. Moreover, Horace's own status in relation to Greek is complex: he himself is *bilinguis* and, in coming from Venusia, is from the same region (Apulia) as the Canusians that he mocks.¹⁹

Nor is Lucilius' own attitude to Greek entirely straightforward: Lucilius was more self-conscious and considered in his use of Greek than appears here, as Horace was no doubt aware.²⁰

¹⁷ Gowers 2012: 319.

¹⁸ Gowers 2012: 319 points out that Horace achieves a neat blending of the two languages in the sounds of the words he chooses: the 'Chio' begins with the Greek letter *chi*, which has no direct Latin equivalent, whilst the 'Falerni' opens with the Latin 'f', contrasting with the Greek *phi* and 'difficult for Greeks to pronounce'. She argues that this produces 'a chiasmic commingling between Greek and Latin letters'.

¹⁹ Gowers 2012: 321 points out that Canusium itself is bilingual in Oscan and Greek. For an overview of language use and bilingualism in Italy, see Adams 2003a: 112–84.

²⁰ On Lucilius' careful use of Greek, see Chahoud 2004; Petersmann 1999; Pezzini 2018: 178–9.

Weaving Together the Threads

A snippet of Macrobius discusses Lucilius' use of Greek terms in place of Latin:

Lucilius in primo:
porro 'clinopodas' 'lychnosque' ut diximus
σεμνῶς
ante 'pedes lecti' atque 'lucernas'.
(Lucilius 15–16, quoted in Macrobius, *Saturnalia*, vi.4.18)

[For example] Lucilius in his first book (says): 'Furthermore, when we speak affectedly, we say *clinopodas* and *lychnos* instead of *the feet of a bed* and *lamps*.'

Here, Lucilius uses a Greek adverb (σεμνῶς) to send up the practice of using Greek words instead of Latin ones. It is clear from this that Lucilius was well aware of the impact of Greek and used it with deliberate effect in his writings: he does not just mix it in at random as Horace implies. Horace's own reluctance to switch into Greek as openly as other satirists marked a change in practice:²¹ there may therefore be an element of defensiveness and one-upmanship in the way he characterizes Lucilius and his defender. It is another example of the competing claims to linguistic authority discussed above. The debate played out between Horace and his interlocutor should inform our understanding of the place of Greek in the letters, reminding us of the breadth of attitudes to it and of the fact that these attitudes were never fixed even at a single moment in time: instead, they were always up for debate. These underlying attitudes, although always present in the letters, were also shaped by the immediate pressures of personal relationships and generic expectations.

We see the different parameters of this debate in the usage of Greek within the letters. In contrast to the passage of Horace, which claims that the use of Greek undermines the Roman *patria*, both Cicero and Pliny, as we saw above, can use a Greek Homeric quotation to stress the importance of protecting that fatherland (even if the centrality of that fatherland is reduced in the time period between the two quotations). The gap between Greek and Roman language and politics is,

²¹ Chahoud 2004 and Gowers 2012: 318.

however, elsewhere brought to the fore. Cicero, for example, relies upon it in using Greek to stress the unacceptable nature of Caesar's behaviour.²² Greek was both part of Roman culture and communication – hence the need to think bilingually throughout the letters and the possibility of using Greek to evoke particular domains – and distanced from it. This gave Greek its varied effect within the letters.

The Horatian passage explicitly raises the question of genre and its effect on the appropriateness of Greek: he asks whether the mixing of languages is acceptable not only in verse, but also in a Roman law court, and it is in the context of pleading a case using Greek as well as Latin phrases that the accusation of forgetting the fatherland is made. He raises this question about the limitations of genre in response to his interlocutor loosely using the word *sermo* to describe the circumstances in which the use of Greek alongside Latin is something to be praised. Gowers argues that *sermo* is deliberately chosen here for its broad semantic range: it can indicate 'satire, casual conversation, letters and forensic speech'.²³ This debate about how far genre influences the appropriateness of code-switching is one that we have engaged with throughout this volume. The relative informality and conversational nature of the epistolary genre played an important role in facilitating the use of Greek, but the attitudes and associations of Greek, expressed by Horace and in Cicero's *De Officiis*, did not disappear altogether. In addition, the epistolary genre was itself broad and flexible, as illustrated by Cicero's claims to be writing *genere nouo* to Caesar (Chapter 3) and the position of the language of letters between oral and written, formal and informal, as shown in our analysis of Suetonius (Chapter 5).

This book has considered the appropriateness of the application of the category of 'orality' to the language of letters. Stemming from ancient authors' own characterization of their letters as conversational, previous scholarship has often asked how 'oral' ancient letters are. It has standardly been argued that

²² See Chapter 3 and Gildenhard 2006.

²³ Gowers 2012: 320.

Cicero's letters come closer to the spontaneous language of conversation than the more artificial language of later authors.²⁴ We have, however, shown that at all periods both orality and artificiality are in play and what has seemed to be an increase in the latter over time may in part instead reflect the changing nature of conversational Latin and the place of Greek within it. Our analysis has repeatedly illustrated the complexity of the relationship between orality, conversationality, informality and artificiality. Asking how 'oral' or how 'artificial' letters are is in some ways the wrong question: the language of letters adopts a range of different modes and registers to achieve the purpose at hand. Although it is possible to isolate 'oral' dimensions of the letters (Cicero's use of dialectical forms as part of his strategy of characterization of others (Chapter 2) for example), oral and written language practices cannot easily be separated out in order to work out how far code-switching reflects each. Comparison between the language of letters and that in oral contexts within the text of Suetonius has shown the many overlaps between them and the dangers of treating 'orality' too narrowly: features such as literary quotations, which could be assumed to be signs of artificiality within letters, appear in both oral and non-oral contexts. The comparative analysis in Chapter 2 also illustrates the difficulties of applying divisions between oral and written in modern analysis to the ancient evidence. Ancient letters were written in a world in which the boundary between oral and text was frequently blurred, as the practice of dictation of letters reminds us. Within the text of the letters we see a concern with how the text sounds and an expectation of aural bilingual awareness: Cicero assesses whether a Latin word is acceptable because it sounds like a Greek obscenity; Augustus uses the sound of the word as the basis of a pun.²⁵

The dialogue within the letters, in the broadest sense of the term, is that of a bilingual cultural and literary elite who are

²⁴ See especially Rochette 2010: 289, quoted and discussed at the beginning of Chapter 2.

²⁵ See Chapter 2 for a discussion of the use of the word *bini* at *Fam.* 1x.22.3; see Chapter 5 for a discussion of the pun on the sound of the word *Nonis* ('non est'), flagged via Greek commentary, at *Aug.* 92.2.

Sending Letters On

as comfortable quoting Homer as they are citing Koine Greek or inventing their own coinages. This does not, however, mean that we should set the letters apart from more ‘popular’ language. Although comparison with uses of Greek from the streets of Rome cited within Suetonius’ text shows that there are some limitations to the acceptable language of letters, it also reveals some broad similarities. Of course, Suetonius’ text is not straightforwardly ‘popular’ either, but the overlaps between them show at least that claims to be writing *plebeio sermone* were not entirely empty. This should prompt us to think more widely about the nature of epistolarity and what it captured. The language of letters is built out of a range of different languages, oral and not, popular and elite, Greek and Latin, and reflects the broader continua of Roman communication and society.

Sending Letters On

This volume has showcased a range of approaches to the practice, and avoidance, of code-switching into Greek – historical, literary and (socio)linguistic – and demonstrated how they can work in conjunction. It is more comprehensive than any single previous discussion of code-switching in Roman prose epistolography. The quantitative analysis and database on which this volume is founded has demonstrated the breadth of functions of Greek code-switching in the letters and enabled detailed comparison across these four corpora. There is, nevertheless, plenty of scope for further work, both on the authors considered here and on other epistolary collections. Using the data collected in the database, it would be possible to study the code-switching of Cicero, Pliny, Fronto and Suetonius from a range of different angles. One could isolate particular types or functions of Greek (philosophical or literary for example) and consider in more detail their use and variation across the letters. We have restricted our analysis to full-blown code-switching, but a study of different bilingual phenomena in the letters would be welcome: as Swain notes, there are some indicative correlations between the appearance of code-switching and borrowing in

Cicero's letters.²⁶ A comparison between the Latin and Greek linguistic patterns of these authors (most obviously, the relationship between Latin and Greek literary quotations) could shed further light on the ways in which the use of Greek is distinct, or not, from other rhetorical strategies in the letters.²⁷

There is also the possibility of applying the methodology of this volume to other epistolary collections. A group of later letter writers, including Ausonius, Jerome, Augustine, Sidonius Apollinaris and Symmachus, lie outside the chronological scope of this volume, but also deploy Greek code-switching (with varying frequency). Analysing their practice, and the ways that it varies from that of the authors considered in this volume, could shed light on changing Roman bilingualism, identity and epistolarity in this later period, as well as on broader societal and political changes seen through letters. An analysis of the practice of code-switching in letter collections that do not fit neatly into the mode of 'personal' correspondence, such as Seneca's *Ad Lucilium Epistulae Morales*, a philosophical dialogue in epistolary guise, could help us better to appreciate the relationship of these texts to the corpora considered in this volume. One might also extend this analysis to include non-literary letters including scientific and technical *epistulae*, documentary sources and state-level epistolary inscriptions from the East.²⁸ A consideration of the presence, and absence, of code-switching in these different types of letters might allow greater understanding of the generic restrictions on code-switching and the nature and limitations of the epistolary genre.

²⁶ Swain 2002: 157, commenting on Oksala 1953: 90–109.

²⁷ This is a form of analysis for which Mäkilähde and Rissanen 2016 explicitly call. Given the recent suggestion in O'Sullivan 2019 that Cicero used script-switching selectively as a rhetorical strategy, this is another area that deserves further study. The appearance of O'Sullivan 2019 and Rollo 2019 in the same volume of *Classical Quarterly* (published as this book was in the final stages of production) suggests that interest in the transmission of Greek in the manuscripts of the ancient authors considered in this volume is growing. Though we have here generally argued for the need to look beyond script choices in identifying code-switches, research into the manuscript tradition has the potential to further our understanding of ancient bilingual practices.

²⁸ For the *senatus consulta* and *epistulae* of Roman magistrates sent to the Greek East up to and including the reign of Augustus, see Cooley 2007; Coudry 1994; Sherk 1969. For technical letters, see Langslow 2007. For both, see Rochette 1997.

Although this volume has focused on the elite epistolary politics and culture of the Roman world, we have stressed that epistolary code-switching is a phenomenon across cultures and societies. We closed [Chapter 1](#) with three examples of code-switching in letters from different time periods: a letter between Cicero and Atticus composed in 59 BC, a letter from the Dean of Windsor to Henry IV written in 1403, and a letter penned by Van Gogh to his brother in 1881. These examples hint at similarities of content, theme and function in epistolary code-switching across time. All three deploy code-switching in the closing sequence of a letter; the letter to King Henry IV invites comparison with the use of language in letters to and from Roman rulers (explored particularly in [Chapters 4](#) and [5](#)), and can both illuminate and be illuminated by an understanding of its cultural context; the letter from Van Gogh uses French to channel emotional outbursts about love and to create a conspiratorial air between the brothers in an attempt to achieve a specific outcome, reflecting the way that code-switching is frequently employed in ancient letters to create an ‘intimate’ atmosphere and to make things happen. There are other corpora of non-classical letters that could be read in relation to our study of ancient code-switching. Nurmi and Pahta, for example, have considered code-switching within women’s letters written in England between 1400 and 1800, taken from the Corpus of Early English Correspondence.²⁹ One striking example from Nurmi and Pahta’s study is a letter written by the highly learned Elizabeth Carter in 1739 describing her journey from London to Oxford, which includes a code-switch into ancient Greek:³⁰

Some indeed were so complaisant as to affirm that I could not have performed so arduous a Task [part deleted] as ascending the Hill without the Assistance of Pegasus, but this polite Speech was soon contradicted by others who gave me the frightful Greek Name of *Aerobates* which they maliciously translated, riding [part deleted] like a witch upon a Broomstick.³¹

²⁹ Nurmi and Pahta [2012](#). They explain at p. 73 that the Corpus of Early English Correspondence in total ‘contains over 5 million words of running text sampled from letters written between 1402 and 1800’.

³⁰ Samuel Johnson is supposed to have claimed that Elizabeth Carter was the only person who spoke Greek better than he did, see Nurmi and Pahta [2012](#): 83.

³¹ The letter (Carter: 1739, Elizabeth Carter, 69) is quoted in Nurmi and Pahta [2012](#): 83.

The word *Aerobates* (ἀεροβάτης) is defined in Liddell and Scott as ‘one who walks the air’, but is given a ‘malicious’ connection with witchcraft in Carter’s nickname. The use of Greek for a nickname is a practice familiar from the four authors considered in this volume: take for example Augustus playfully naming one of his favourites Κτίστης ‘founder’ (SUET. *Aug.* 98.4), or Clodius referring to Cicero as *cynico consulari* (*Att.* 11.9.1), a nickname that requires understanding of both the Greek and Latin meanings of the adjective (‘doglike’ and ‘Cynic [philosopher]’ respectively). Carter’s passage also recalls the Suetonian material in embedding a term that was initially used orally by a wider group, in this case Carter’s fellow travellers. As in ancient examples, it is difficult to know how seriously to take the insult here: Carter describes it in strong terms, and Nurmi and Pahta see it as a potentially ‘misogynistic’ criticism of a learned woman, but the Greek also carries a degree of distance and levity: Carter goes on to say that they ‘laugh’d about it most part of the way to Oxford’.³²

Other modern letters involve literary quotation from classical authors in their original languages: Benjamin Disraeli for example opens a letter to the solicitor John Frederick Maples by using a quotation from Catullus to congratulate him on the birth of his son:³³

My dear Sir, A letter which begins with Congratulations is generally a pleasant thing, and I therefore feel very grateful, for the opportunity of thus happily Commencing my epistle, to the young Stranger, who

Porrigens teneras manus

Matris e’ gremio suae

Dulce rideat ad patrem

Semihiante labello

But to leave Catullus and congratulations for a more matter of fact subject.

The Latin quotation translates as ‘stretching out his delicate hands from his mother’s lap, he may smile sweetly at his father with semi-parted lips’ and is taken from Catullus, *Carmina* LXI 212–6. As ancient letter writers sometimes do, Disraeli has adapted the Latin quotation to make it work with the

³² Nurmi and Pahta 2012: 83.

³³ Gunn et al. 1982: 6–7; letter 6.

English syntax and meaning by making Maples' son the subject.³⁴ This example suggests that it might be fruitful to use our understanding of the practice of quotation in ancient corpora to approach these modern practices of quotation. Given the knowledge of Classics displayed by the authors and recipients of these letters, these examples from Disraeli and Carter also raise the question of the extent to which ancient letters and letter conventions are models for the modern. Disraeli in fact makes direct reference to Cicero's epistolary practice, perhaps most obviously when he ends a letter to his private secretary Montagu Corry with a quotation from one of Cicero's letters to C. Scribonius Curio (*Fam.* II.3.2):³⁵

'I am sorry to say, the Compound Householder has forced his way to Hughen[den], introduced by Lord Cairns. Vale! Illud cognosces profecto mihi te neque, cariorem, neque jucundiozem, esse quemquam.'

Using the words of Cicero, Disraeli reassures Corry that 'One thing you will surely find, that no one is dearer or more delightful to me than yourself'. This is not an isolated example: in a letter to his sister Sarah, Disraeli gives a description of a dinner with the Duke of Milnes that includes a reference to Cicero's dinner with Julius Caesar described in *Att.* XIII.52 (a letter whose different layers of meaning is discussed in [Chapter 3](#)), and in an open letter to the Queen published in *The Times* on 13 May 1839, signs himself as 'Laelius', a speaker in Cicero's *De Republica* and *De Amicitia*.³⁶ These allusions hint that Roman politics of friendship and letter writing may still be at play in Disraeli's nineteenth-century epistolary interactions. Even

³⁴ The original lines of Catullus read *Torquatus uolo paruulus / matris e gremio suae / porrigens teneras manus / dulce rideat ad patrem / semihante labello*; 'I would see the little Torquatus reaching out his small hands from his mother's lap and smile sweetly at his father with semi-parted lips'. In the original poem, a wedding song, the son has not yet been born but is rather being wished for in future.

³⁵ Pharand et al. 2013: 303–5; letter 4,415.

³⁶ Wiebe and Conacher 1987: 259–60; letter 1046, and 174; letter 929 respectively. Disraeli's engagement with *De Republica* is also evidenced by a letter from April 1828 (Gunn et al. 1982: 106; letter 68), when, in a manner reminiscent of the literary exchanges between Cicero and Atticus, Pliny and Suetonius, and Virgil and Augustus, Disraeli sends a copy of the text to Francis Douce, an antiquarian and close friend of Disraeli's father Isaac.

without direct influence, however, a comparative approach to the phenomenon of epistolary code-switching can shed light on similarities in the practice across time. Our analysis has considered the role of gender, authority, status and education in shaping and explaining practices of code-switching, themes that are also at issue in studies of code-switching in more recent letter collections.³⁷

The methodology developed to study ancient code-switching in this volume could also be applied to modern code-switching corpora in order to continue the dialogue between ancient and modern sociolinguistics. In our analysis, we took account of methods and models originally developed in studies of modern code-switching: amongst the most influential for us have been Myers-Scotton's MLF and Callahan's functional analysis.³⁸ Across the volume, we have tested these out and further developed the latter. Our critical evaluation of functional categories and their subjectivities could be used to inform systematic studies of other bilingual material. Our demonstration of the complex interplay between oral and written in the ancient evidence will, we hope, prove valuable to modern sociolinguists as they increasingly make enquiries into the boundaries between oral and written material. There is real potential for further inter-disciplinary work in this field that will help us to make sense of the phenomenon of code-switching across time.

We have argued in this volume that understanding the use of Greek in Roman epistolography is integral to an understanding of the letters and the society that produced them. Greek code-switching is a window onto the cultural and linguistic politics of the relationship between Greek and Latin, language and Romanness, and onto epistolary relationships and expectations and the way that these change in relation to the historical context. Greek not only reflected but actively constructed the relationships and circumstances that we see in the letters. As Cicero noted jokingly to Paetus, some things were indeed 'better in Greek'.

³⁷ Nurmi and Pahta 2004 look at the relationship between code-switching and social rank; Nurmi and Pahta 2012 discuss the relationship between gender and code-switching.

³⁸ Callahan 2004; Myers-Scotton 1993, 2002, 2006.

APPENDIX: FUNCTIONS OF THE CODE-SWITCHES

Table 22 *Functions of code-switches in Ad Atticum (question marks denote uncertainty over the assignment of the function)*

Function	No. of instances	%
Citation of Greek word under discussion	4	0.4
Code	16	1.8
Commentary	25	2.8
Description	131	14.6
Description: self-description	37	4.1
Discourse marker	2	0.2
Exclamation	9	1.0
<i>GCS (total)</i>	<i>201</i>	<i>22.3</i>
GCS Amor	1	0.1
GCS Architecture	5	0.6
GCS Contest/Entertainment	5	0.6
GCS Finance	5	0.6
GCS Geography/Administration	1	0.1
GCS Literature/Rhetoric/Grammar	67	7.4
GCS Medicine	17	1.9
GCS Music	3	0.3
GCS Other	18	2.0
GCS Philosophy	38	4.2
GCS Politics/Law	29	3.2
GCS Religion	12	1.3
Greeting	2	0.2
Instruction/Request	13	1.4
Metalinguistic	71	7.9
<i>Naming (total)</i>	<i>48</i>	<i>5.3</i>
Naming: nickname	2	0.2

(continued)

Appendix: Functions of the Code-Switches

Table 22 (*cont.*)

Function	No. of instances	%
Naming: personal name	9	1.0
Naming: personal name (adjectival)	7	0.8
Naming: place name	3	0.3
Naming: title of work	27	3.0
Question	1	0.1
<i>Quotation (total)</i>	<i>244</i>	<i>27.1</i>
Quotation: Antony	1	0.1
Quotation: Atticus	67	7.4
Quotation: Atticus?	12	1.3
Quotation: Atticus and Brutus	1	0.1
Quotation: Caecius	1	0.1
Quotation: Curio	1	0.1
Quotation: Fabius Gellus	1	0.1
Quotation: Gabinius Antiochus	1	0.1
Quotation: imagined (Atticus)	2	0.2
Quotation: imagined (Quintus)	1	0.1
Quotation: literary (Archilochus)	1	0.1
Quotation: literary (Aristotle)	3	0.3
Quotation: literary (Callimachus?)	1	0.1
Quotation: literary (Carneades)	2	0.2
Quotation: literary (Dionysius)	1	0.1
Quotation: literary (Epicharmus)	1	0.1
Quotation: literary (Epicurean)	1	0.1
Quotation: literary (Euripides)	3	0.3
Quotation: literary (Euripides (adapted by Aristophanes))	1	0.1
Quotation: literary (Euripides (partial))	8	0.9
Quotation: literary (Heraclitus)	1	0.1
Quotation: literary (Herodotus)	1	0.1
Quotation: literary (Hesiod)	2	0.2
Quotation: literary (Homer)	40	4.4
Quotation: literary (Homer (altered))	2	0.2
Quotation: literary (Homer (partial))	7	0.8
Quotation: literary (Homer (partial/altered))	1	0.1
Quotation: literary (Leonidas of Tarentum; Hesiod?)	1	0.1
Quotation: literary (Menander)	3	0.3
Quotation: literary (Menander (partial))	1	0.1
Quotation: literary (Phocylides)	1	0.1
Quotation: literary (Pindar)	6	0.7

Appendix: Functions of the Code-Switches

Table 22 (*cont.*)

Function	No. of instances	%
Quotation: literary (Plato)	1	0.1
Quotation: literary (Rhinton)	1	0.1
Quotation: literary (Sophocles)	3	0.3
Quotation: literary (Stesichorus (partial))	1	0.1
Quotation: literary (Thucydides)	2	0.2
Quotation: literary (Thucydides (partial))	1	0.1
Quotation: literary (unknown)	8	0.8
Quotation: Ovius	1	0.1
Quotation: Philotimus	1	0.1
Quotation: Pompey	3	0.3
Quotation: proverb/gnomic statement	18	2.0
Quotation: proverb/gnomic statement (altered, disputed reading)	1	0.1
Quotation: proverb/gnomic statement (partial)	12	1.3
Quotation: proverb/gnomic statement (partial/altered)	1	0.1
Quotation: proverb/gnomic statement?	2	0.2
Quotation: Quintus	1	0.1
Quotation: rumour	1	0.1
Quotation: self-quotation	5	0.6
Quotation: Sextus	1	0.1
Quotation: Sicilians	1	0.1
Quotation: Tiro	1	0.1
Quotation: Vettius Cyrus	2	0.2
Referential	78	8.7
Wordplay	17	1.9
Wordplay?	1	0.1
<i>Total</i>	<i>900</i>	<i>100</i>

Appendix: Functions of the Code-Switches

Table 23 *Functions of code-switches in Ad Familiares (question marks denote uncertainty over the assignment of the function)*

Function	No. of instances	%
Citation of Greek word under discussion	2	1.6
Code	1	0.8
Commentary	1	0.8
Description	14	11.4
<i>GCS (total)</i>	46	37.4
GCS Finance	2	1.6
GCS Geography/Administration	2	1.6
GCS Literature/Rhetoric/Grammar	9	7.3
GCS Medicine	9	7.3
GCS Other	1	0.8
GCS Philosophy	19	15.4
GCS Politics/Law	4	3.2
Instruction/Request	1	0.8
Metalinguistic	12	9.8
<i>Naming (total)</i>	7	5.7
Naming: personal name	4	3.3
Naming: place name	1	0.8
Naming: title of work	2	1.6
<i>Quotation (total)</i>	29	23.6
Quotation: Balbus	1	0.8
Quotation: literary (Aristotle)	2	1.6
Quotation: literary (Epicurus)	2	1.6
Quotation: literary (Euripides)	2	1.6
Quotation: literary (Euripides?)	1	0.8
Quotation: literary (Hesiod)	1	0.8
Quotation: literary (Homer (partial))	1	0.8
Quotation: literary (Homer)	7	5.7
Quotation: literary (unknown)	1	0.8
Quotation: Papirius Paetus?	1	0.8
Quotation: Precilius	2	1.6
Quotation: proverb/gnomic statement	5	4.1
Quotation: proverb/gnomic statement (partial)	2	1.6

Appendix: Functions of the Code-Switches

Table 23 (*cont.*)

Function	No. of instances	%
Quotation: rumour	1	0.8
Referential	6	4.9
Wordplay	4	3.3
<i>Total</i>	<i>123</i>	<i>100</i>

Table 24 *Functions of code-switches in Ad Quantum fratrem (question marks denote uncertainty over the assignment of the function)*

Function	No. of instances	%
Description	3	6.1
Discourse marker	1	2.0
Exclamation	1	2.0
<i>GCS (total)</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>12.2</i>
GCS Architecture	1	2.0
GCS Literature/Rhetoric/Grammar	4	8.2
GCS Politics/Law	1	2.0
Instruction/Request	1	2.0
Metalinguistic	9	18.4
<i>Naming (total)</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>6.1</i>
Naming: personal name	1	2.0
Naming: title of work	2	4.1
<i>Quotation (total)</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>44.9</i>
Quotation: Caesar	1	2.0
Quotation: literary (Aeschylus (partial))	2	4.1
Quotation: literary (Epicharmus)	1	2.0
Quotation: literary (Euripides)	1	2.0
Quotation: literary (Homer (partial))	1	2.0
Quotation: literary (Homer)	5	10.2
Quotation: literary (Sophocles (partial, adapted))	2	4.1

(*continued*)

Appendix: Functions of the Code-Switches

Table 24 (*cont.*)

Function	No. of instances	%
Quotation: proverb/gnomic statement	2	4.1
Quotation: proverb/gnomic statement (partial)	1	2.0
Quotation: Quintus	5	10.2
Quotation: Quintus?	1	2.0
Referential	2	4.1
Wordplay?	1	2.0
<i>Total</i>	<i>49</i>	<i>100</i>

Table 25 *Functions of code-switching in letters written by authors other than Cicero (includes five switches in letters from Cicero's son to Tiro, two in letters from Quintus Cicero to Tiro and fourteen in letters to Cicero)*

Function	No.	%
Commentary	1	4.8
Description	1	4.8
Description: self-description	1	4.8
<i>GCS (total)</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>38.1</i>
GCS Literature/Rhetoric/Grammar	3	14.3
GCS Philosophy	5	23.8
Metalinguistic	3	14.3
Naming: place name	1	4.8
<i>Quotation (total)</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>23.8</i>
Quotation: literary: Aristotle	1	4.8
Quotation: literary (Epicurus)	1	4.8
Quotation: literary (Euripides)	1	4.8
Quotation: literary (Euripides?)	1	4.8
Quotation: rumour	1	4.8
Referential	1	4.8
<i>Total</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>100</i>

Table 26 *Distribution by author of functions of code-switches in letters written by authors other than Cicero*

Function	Author								
	Antony	Caelius	Cassius	Cassius Parmensis	Cicero Junior	Curius	Lentulus	Q. Cicero	Trebonius
Commentary					I				
Description						I			
Description: self-description	I								
<i>GCS (total)</i>		2	4		2				
GCS Literature/Rhetoric/Grammar		2			I				
GCS Philosophy			4		I				
Metalinguistic			I		I				I
Naming: place name				I					
<i>Quotation (total)</i>			2				I	2	
Quotation: literary (Aristotle)			I						
Quotation: literary (Epicurus)			I						
Quotation: literary (Euripides)								I	
Quotation: literary (Euripides?)							I		
Quotation: rumour								I	
Referential					I				
<i>Total</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>I</i>

Appendix: Functions of the Code-Switches

Table 27 *Functions of code-switches in Pliny's correspondence (question marks denote uncertainty over the assignment of the function)*

Function	No. of instances	%
Description	3	2.1
Explanation	1	0.7
<i>GCS (total)</i>	68	46.6
GCS Architecture	17	11.6
GCS Contest/Entertainment	14	9.6
GCS Geography/Administration	2	1.4
GCS Literature/Rhetoric/Grammar	8	5.5
GCS Literature/Rhetoric/Grammar?	1	0.7
GCS Medicine	3	2.1
GCS Other	5	3.4
GCS Other?	2	1.4
GCS Politics/Law	15	10.3
GCS Religion	1	0.7
Metalinguistic	2	1.4
<i>Naming (total)</i>	3	2.1
Naming: title of work	2	1.4
Naming: title of work (partial)	1	0.7
<i>Quotation (total)</i>	65	44.5
Quotation: literary (Aeschines)	7	4.8
Quotation: literary (Aristophanes)	1	0.7
Quotation: literary (Cicero)?	1	0.7
Quotation: literary (Cicero, letters)	1	0.7
Quotation: literary (Demosthenes)	16	11.0
Quotation: literary (Eupolis)	3	2.1
Quotation: literary (Eupolis)?	1	0.7
Quotation: literary (Euripides)	3	2.1
Quotation: literary (Hesiod)	1	0.7
Quotation: literary (Homer)	17	11.6
Quotation: literary (Plato)	1	0.7
Quotation: literary (Pliny, letters)	2	1.4
Quotation: literary (Thucydides)	2	1.4
Quotation: literary (Xenophon)	1	0.7
Quotation: oral (Aeschines)	1	0.7
Quotation: oral (Corellius)	1	0.7
Quotation: oral (emperor Trajan)	1	0.7

Appendix: Functions of the Code-Switches

Table 27 (*cont.*)

Function	No. of instances	%
Quotation: oral (unspecified)	1	0.7
Quotation: oral (Veiento)	1	0.7
Quotation: proverb/gnomic statement	1	0.7
Quotation: self-quotation	2	1.4
Referential?	2	1.4
Wordplay	2	1.4
<i>Total</i>	<i>146</i>	<i>100</i>

Table 28 *Functions of code-switches in Fronto's correspondence (question marks denote uncertainty over the assignment of the function)*

Function	No. of instances	%
Description	2	1.3
Description?	2	1.3
Exclamation	1	0.7
<i>GCS (total)</i>	<i>96</i>	<i>62.0</i>
GCS Amor	12	7.7
GCS Contest/Entertainment	2	1.3
GCS Literature/Rhetoric/Grammar	64	41.3
GCS Literature/Rhetoric/Grammar?	1	0.7
GCS Medicine	4	2.6
GCS Other	2	1.3
GCS Other?	1	0.7
GCS Philosophy	4	2.6
GCS Philosophy?	1	0.7
GCS Politics/Law	3	1.9
GCS Religion	2	1.3
Instruction/Request	3	1.9
Instruction/Request?	1	0.7
Metalinguistic	3	1.9
<i>Naming (total)</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>2.6</i>
Naming: personal name	1	0.7

(*continued*)

Appendix: Functions of the Code-Switches

Table 28 (*cont.*)

Function	No. of instances	%
Naming: title of work	3	1.9
<i>Quotation (total)</i>	38	24.5
Quotation: imagined	5	3.2
Quotation: literary (Apollonius)	5	3.2
Quotation: literary (Callimachus)	2	1.3
Quotation: literary (Cato)	1	0.7
Quotation: literary (Euripides)	1	0.7
Quotation: literary (Homer)	14	9.0
Quotation: literary (Laberius)?	1	0.7
Quotation: literary (Plutarch?)	1	0.7
Quotation: literary (Theodorus)	1	0.7
Quotation: literary?	2	1.3
Quotation: oral (Polemo)?	1	0.7
Quotation: proverb/gnomic statement	2	1.3
Quotation: self-quotation	2	1.3
Referential?	3	1.9
Wordplay?	2	1.3
<i>Total</i>	155	100

Appendix: Functions of the Code-Switches

Table 29 *Functions of code-switches in Suetonius' corpus*

Function	No. of instances	%
Citation of Greek word under discussion	1	0.7
Description	16	10.7
<i>GCS (total)</i>	<i>48</i>	<i>32.2</i>
GCS Amor	2	1.3
GCS Architecture	2	1.3
GCS Clothing	2	1.3
GCS Contest/Entertainment	16	10.7
GCS Literature/Rhetoric/Grammar	17	11.4
GCS Medicine	1	0.7
GCS Other	1	0.7
GCS Philosophy	3	2.0
GCS Religion	4	2.7
Instruction/Request	2	1.3
Insult/Mockery	7	4.7
Metalinguistic	2	1.3
<i>Naming (total)</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>11.4</i>
Naming: nickname	7	4.7
Naming: personal name	3	2.0
Naming: song title	1	0.7
Naming: title of work	6	4.0
Omen/Prophecy	2	1.3
Question	2	1.3
<i>Quotation (total)</i>	<i>31</i>	<i>20.8</i>
Quotation: inscription	1	0.7
Quotation: literary (Atellan farce)	1	0.7
Quotation: literary (Euripides)	3	2.0
Quotation: literary (Homer)	10	6.7
Quotation: literary (Homeric allusion)	1	0.7
Quotation: literary (Menander)	1	0.7
Quotation: literary (unknown)	2	1.3
Quotation: mock literary	4	2.7
Quotation: popular verse	4	2.7
Quotation: proverb/gnomic statement	4	2.7
Referential	14	9.4
Wordplay	7	4.7
<i>Total</i>	<i>149</i>	<i>100</i>

Appendix: Functions of the Code-Switches

Table 30 *Functions of epistolary code-switches in Suetonius' corpus*

Function	No. of instances	%
Description	11	40.7
<i>GCS (total)</i>	5	18.5
GCS Literature/Rhetoric/Grammar	4	14.8
GCS Medicine	1	3.7
Metalinguistic	2	7.4
<i>Naming (total)</i>	1	3.7
Naming: title of work	1	3.7
<i>Quotation (total)</i>	2	7.4
Quotation: literary (Homer)	1	3.7
Quotation: literary (unknown)	1	3.7
Referential	3	11.1
Wordplay	3	11.1
<i>Total</i>	27	100

Table 31 *Functions of code-switching in Suetonius across different sources*

Function	Narrative Voice		Letters		Oral		Oral?	
	No. of instances	%	No. of instances	%	No. of instances	%	No. of instances	%
Citation of Greek word under discussion	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Description	2	4.2	11	40.7	0	0.0	3	13.6
<i>GCS (total)</i>	32	66.7	5	18.5	1	3.0	6	27.3
GCS Amor	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	9.1
GCS Architecture	1	2.1	0	0	0	0	1	4.5
GCS Clothing	2	4.2	0	0	0	0	0	0
GCS Contest/Entertainment	14	29.2	0	0	0	0	1	4.5
GCS Literature/Rhetoric/Grammar	9	18.8	4	14.8	0	0	1	4.5
GCS Medicine	0	0	1	3.7	0	0	0	0
GCS Other	0	0	0	0	1	3.0	0	0
GCS Philosophy	2	4.2	0	0	0	0	1	4.5
GCS Religion	4	8.3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Instruction/Request	0	0	0	0	2	6.1	0	0
Insult/Mockery	0	0	0	0	3	9.1	3	13.6
Metalinguistic	0	0	2	7.4	0	0.0	0	0.0
<i>Naming (total)</i>	4	8.3	1	3.7	2	6.1	3	13.6
Naming: nickname	2	4.2	0	0	2	6.1	2	9.1
Naming: personal name	2	4.2	0	0	0	0	1	4.5

(continued)

Table 31 (*cont.*)

Function	Narrative Voice		Letters		Oral		Oral?	
	No. of instances	%	No. of instances	%	No. of instances	%	No. of instances	%
Naming: song title	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Naming: title of work	0	0	1	3.7	0	0	0	0
Omen/Prophecy	0	0	0	0	2	6.1	0	0
Question	0	0	0	0	2	6.1	0	0
<i>Quotation (total)</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>7.4</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>57.6</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>27.3</i>
Quotation: inscription	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Quotation: literary (Atellan farce)	0	0	0	0	1	3.0	0	0
Quotation: literary (Euripides)	0	0	0	0	1	3.0	1	4.5
Quotation: literary (Homer)	0	0	1	3.7	8	24.2	0	0
Quotation: literary (Homeric allusion)	0	0	0	0	1	3.0	0	0
Quotation: literary (Menander)	0	0	0	0	1	3.0	0	0
Quotation: literary (unknown)	0	0	1	3.7	1	3.0	0	0
Quotation: mock literary	0	0	0	0	4	12.1	0	0
Quotation: popular verse	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	13.6
Quotation: proverb/gnomic statement	0	0	0	0	2	6.1	2	9.1
Referential	10	20.8	3	11.1	1	3.0	0	0
Wordplay	0	0	3	11.1	1	3.0	1	4.5
<i>Total</i>	<i>48</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>27</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>33</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>100</i>

Note: the total number of functions of code-switches in this table is lower than the total number in Table 29, since there are seventeen code-switches in Suetonius that come from other written sources (literary works, inscriptions, a decree) and are therefore not counted in this table.

Table 32 *Code-switches involving Fronto in ex Auli Gellii Noctibus Atticis*

<i>Noctes Att.</i>	Speaker	Interlocutor	Greek code-switch	Function of code-switch	Flagged	Context	Comments
ii.26.1	Favorinus	Fronto	ξανθός	Citation of Greek word under discussion		Comparison between Greek and Latin words for colours.	
ii.26.1	Favorinus	Fronto	ἐρυθρός	Citation of Greek word under discussion		Comparison between Greek and Latin words for colours.	
ii.26.1	Favorinus	Fronto	πυρρός	Citation of Greek word under discussion		Comparison between Greek and Latin words for colours.	
ii.26.1	Favorinus	Fronto	φοῖνιξ	Citation of Greek word under discussion		Comparison between Greek and Latin words for colours.	
ii.26.3	Fronto	Favorinus	φοίνικα	Quotation: oral (Favorinus)	<i>quem tu Graece ... dixisti</i>	Comparison between Greek and Latin words for colours.	
ii.26.3	Fronto	Favorinus	σπάδικα (VdH); <i>spadica</i> (Haines)	Citation of Greek word under discussion	<i>Dorici uocant</i>	Comparison between Greek and Latin words for colours.	
ii.26.3	Fronto	Favorinus	συνώνυμος	GCS Literature/ Rhetoric/ Grammar		Comparison between Greek and Latin words for colours.	VdH comm: Fronto uses Latin form <i>synonymus</i> at 144,20 and 152,1.
ii.26.4	Fronto	Favorinus	γλαυκῶπις	Citation of Greek word under discussion	<i>quae a Graecis</i>	Comparison between Greek and Latin words for colours.	

(continued)

Table 32 (*cont.*)

<i>Noctes Att.</i>	Speaker	Interlocutor	Greek code-switch	Function of code-switch	Flagged	Context	Comments
ii.26.5	Favorinus	Fronto	καί νύ κεν ἡ παρέλασας ἡ ἀμφήριστον ἔθηκας	Quotation: Literary (Homer)		Comparison between Greek and Latin words for colours. See below for further discussion.	<i>quod in uersu Homericō est</i> , i.e. Iliad 23.382 (lightly revised from third to second person)
xiii.28	Fronto	Unnamed person present at reading of Claudius Quadrigrarius' Annals	ἐμφατικώτερον	GCS Literature/ Rhetoric/ Grammar		Response to listener's criticisms about style of Claudius Quadrigrarius' writing.	VdH 262.10 comm: 'Latin authors always use the comparative in its Greek form, for the first time Cic. Ad Brut. ap. Non. p.421,28. Latin <i>emphasis</i> is used since Quintilian's Institutio; see at 105,17f.'
xiii.28	Fronto	Unnamed person present at reading of Claudius Quadrigrarius' Annals	τὸ ἐπὶ τῇ φακῇ μύρον	Quotation: proverb		Response to listener's criticisms about style of Claudius Quadrigrarius' writing: warning about choice of words.	VdH 262.15 comm: Greek proverb also used at CIC. <i>Att.</i> 1.19.2, not 'a waste of a good thing' but 'things that do not mix'.
xix.8.6	Fronto	'Poet'	ἀπαραιμύθητον	GCS Politics/Law		Discussion of correct application of singular and plural for various words.	

xix.8.3	‘Poet’	Fronto	ἐνικῶς	GCS Literature/ Rhetoric/ Grammar		Discussion of correct application of singular and plural for various words.	
xix.8.7	Fronto	‘Poet’	ἐνικῶς	GCS Literature/ Rhetoric/ Grammar		Discussion of correct application of singular and plural for various words.	
xix.8.8	Aulus Gellius	N/A. Narration.	πληθυντικῶς	GCS Literature/ Rhetoric/ Grammar		Discussion of correct application of singular and plural for various words.	Narration at end of imagined / reconstructed conversation between Fronto and ‘poet’.
xix.13	Apollinaris	Fronto	Ἀκλαῆς	Naming: book title		Discussion of the Greek and Latin terms for dwarf.	Title of Aristophanic comedy.
xix.13	Apollinaris	Fronto	νάνους	Citation of Greek word under discussion	<i>enim Graeci uocauerunt</i>	Discussion of the Greek and Latin terms for dwarf.	

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INDEX

Page numbers with ‘t’ are tables; with ‘n’ are notes.

- Ad Atticum* (Cicero), *see* Cicero (Marcus Tullius Cicero)
- Ad Familiares* (Cicero), *see* Cicero (Marcus Tullius Cicero)
- Ad Quintum fratrem* (Cicero), *see* Cicero (Marcus Tullius Cicero)
- Adams, J. N. 8, 17–18, 42, 43, 58, 60, 65–9, 74, 77–8, 94, 99, 116, 119–20, 121, 125–6, 129, 130, 139, 142–3, 144, 147, 151, 213, 265
- Aerobates* 288
- agona* 234n40, 243–4
- amicitia* (friendship) 3, 131, 155–65, 273
- Amor (GCS) 92t15, 204–5, 291, 299, 303t31, *see also* love
- Anacharsis 215
- analogia* 184, 226
- antithetis* 185–7
- Antoninus Pius 176
- Antonius Marcus (Antony) 107, 152–3, 161, 291, 297t26
- Apollonius 95t16, 103
- Appius Apollonides 191
- Apuleius, *Metamorphoses* 14–15
- Areopagus 145–6
- Ars rhetorica* (Iulius Victor) 16
- articles, Greek 75–6
- artificiality 76–80, 88–93, 284
- ascopa* 243–4
- Ateius Philologus, Lucius 50n28
- Augustine 185–6
- Augustus 13, 150n111, 233, 234
Fronto on eloquence of 228–9
- functional categories 256, 257, 266–7
- in Suetonius 246–8, 249–5, 256–7
- to Virgil 273–4
- Aurelius, Marcus, *see* Marcus Aurelius
- Ausonius, to Paulinus of Nola 11
- autograph letters 181–3
- Bernard, J.-E. 113
- betizare* 78, 249–50, 252
- biculturalism 5–6
- bilingualism 2, 5–6, 38, 89, 105, 286, *see also* Cicero; Fronto; Pliny; Suetonius
- bini* 109–10
- Birch, R. A. 233, 260, 261–4
- Blanc, M. H. A. 59n40
- Boopidis* 122–3
- borrowing 7–8, 18–19, 6163n57, 69
Cicero 114–16, 121t22n30, 125, 286
Fronto 16, 184–90
Pliny 71–4
Suetonius 224–5, 243
- Brunt, P. 131
- Brutus 128
- Caelius Rufus, Marcus 128–9
- Caligula 229
- Callahan, L. 43, 54, 59, 62–3, 81, 86–7, 290
- Callimachus 95t16, 102, 211
- Carter, Elizabeth 287, 288
- case usage 65–75, 68t8, 70t9

Index

- Cassius 75–6, 128, 135, 143n93, 297126
 Cassius Parmensis 6818, 128, 297126
 Cato, in *De Senectute* (Cicero) 105
 Catullus, *Carmina* 288–9
 Champlin, E. 206
 Chaucer, Geoffrey 35
 Cicero (Junior) 128, 297126
 Cicero (Marcus Tullius Cicero) 4, 15–17,
 32–3, 40, 93, 111–20, 172–4
 chronological variation in
 code-switching 136–43
 exile 136, 138–42
 and familiarity 153–4
 Appius 154–8
 Atticus 158–63
 Caesar 165–72
 Pompey 165–72
 flagging code-switching 143–8
 functional categories 81–5, 125–7,
 131–6, 133117, 291, 294,
 295123
 literary quotations 94, 9597116
 wordplay 12
 in *Gram. et rhet.* 50n28
 inter- and intra-sentential switching
 58–9, 129–30
 and intimacy of
 codeswitching 129–31
 letters to 117, 296125, 297126
 markedness 119–20
 and orality 103–4, 105, 106–10
 and Pliny, Cicero's influence
 on 274–6
 script 190
 script-switching 120–5
 speeches 115–16, 166
 statistics and patterns of code-
 switching 127–9, 192–3,
 236–7
 Tusculan Disputations 14
 works
Ad Atticum 1–3, 32–3, 75, 127–9, 130,
 277–8
 artificial forms 76–8
 Atticus 154–5, 158–65
 on Caesar 167–70, 289
 case usage 65–6, 74
 closing greetings 33–4
 on duty 116
 flagging 143–8
 frequency of switches 136–43, 193
 functional categories 82,
 83110, 85111, 133, 133117,
 134–5, 291
 GCS (philosophy) 127
 literary quotations 95116, 139
 wordplay 149–50
 Greek articles 75
 orality 108
 parts of speech used 5115, 52–3
 on Pompey 167–70
 script and manuscript 120–1,
 122–5
 statistics 194120
Ad Familiares 30, 130, 193, 194120
 and Appius Claudius Pulcher
 145, 154–8
 and Caesar 166, 170–2
 case usage 67, 6818
 functional categories 82, 83110,
 85111, 92115, 133, 133117,
 134–5, 294
 GCS philosophy 267
 literary quotations 95116
 Greek articles 75–6
 informality/
 conversationality 118–19
 parts of speech 43, 4814
 to C. Scribonius Curio 289–90
 to Paetus 30, 109–10, 117
Ad Quintum fratrem 130, 193, 194120
 functional categories 82, 83110,
 85111, 133–6, 133117, 295123
 literary quotations 95116
De Amicitia 157, 160, 164–5, 289
De Finibus 116
De Natura Deorum 116
De Officiis 14, 102, 116, 117, 281
De Oratore 216
De Senectute 105
Pro Marcello 166
 Cicero, Quintus 128, 297126
 citation of Greek word under discussion
 (functional category) 2011,
 25, 4513, 49–50, 83110, 291
 Cicero 294
 Fronto 108, 305132
 Suetonius 301

Index

- citizenship of words 184, 226–7
 Civil War 136, 138–43, 168–70, 173
 Clackson, J. 118
 Clark, A. 126–7, 172
 Claudius, Augustus' letters on 264–8
 Claudius Pulcher, Appius 145, 154–8
 code (functional category) 83110, 132,
 133, 152–3, 263, 291, 294
 code-switching
 defined 6
 see also individual authors; modern
 code-switching
 colloquial tone 41, 89, 239–41
 Cicero 16–17, 78, 103–4, 118, 285
 Fronto 177–8
 see also conversationality; orality;
 popular (*uulgus*)
 colour terms 16, 185
 commentary (functional category) 25,
 83110, 86, 132, 291, 294,
 296125, 297126
 confidentiality 152–3
 constraints 42, 43, 75–6
 modern 63–5
 contest/entertainment (GCS)
 Cicero 92115, 93, 144, 291
 Fronto 92115, 204–5, 299
 Pliny 92115, 298
 Suetonius 92115, 301
 conversationality 239, 258, 283–4
 Cicero 17, 82, 110, 118–19
 Conversation Analysis approach 10
 Fronto 179–80
 see also colloquial tone;
 conversationality
 Cornelianus 47
 Cornelius Dolabella, Publius 76, 149–50
 Corry, Montagu 289
 culture 278–85
 Fronto on 212–19, 287
 Greek 110, 114
 Roman 3–6, 35, 126–7, 148, 152
 see also Greek cultural sphere
 (GCS); Romanness
 Curius, Manius 6818, 128, 146, 297126

 database 6, 18–24, 2011, 58, 73n84, 285
 De Amicitia (Cicero) 157, 160, 164–5, 289
 De Analogia (Caesar) 166
 De Finibus (Cicero) 116
 De Natura Deorum (Cicero) 116
 De Officiis (Cicero) 116
 on using Greek words 14, 102, 117, 281
 De Oratore (Cicero) 216
 De Senectute (Cicero) 105
 description (functional category) 82–9,
 83110, 85111, 133117, 291,
 296125, 297126
 Cicero 132, 294, 295123
 Fronto 299
 Pliny 277–8, 298
 Suetonius 242, 301, 302130
 Augustus 256, 257, *see also*
 self-description
 dictation 33, 181–3
 discourse marker (functional category)
 25, 83110, 86, 90114, 236,
 291, 295123
 Disraeli, Benjamin 288–90
 distancing 113, 195
 Cicero 126, 158, 172
 Fronto 203, 205, 207–8
 Suetonius 266–8
 Dolabella, *see* Cornelius Dolabella,
 Publius
 Domitia Lucilla 191, 213–15
 Domitian (Titus Flavius
 Domitianus) 244–5
 Dubuisson, M. 15, 130, 225n13, 231
 Dunkel, G. E. 75, 99, 130

 eloquence, of emperors 227–9
 emblema (ἔμβλημα) 223, 225, 233
 emperors
 language/speech of 221–6, 227–9,
 239–40, 242, 246, 279
 see also Augustus; Caligula;
 Domitian; Hadrian; Marcus
 Aurelius; Nero; Tiberius;
 Verus, Lucius
 endings of letters 33–5
 Epistles (Seneca) 184, 226–7
 epistolarity 31–2, 285, 286
 Euripides 95116, 98–9
 exclamation (functional category) 83110,
 291
 Cicero 295123
 Fronto 299

Index

- exile, Cicero's 136, 138–42
 explanation (functional category) 25, 83110, 298
- facteon* 11, 76–8, 200–1
- familiarity
 Cicero 153–4
 Appius 154–8
 Atticus 158–63
 Caesar 165–72
 Pompey 165–72
- Favorinus 103, 185, 217, 305132
- fictional prose, American 54, 5516
- flagging of code-switching 2111, 73n84, 185–7
 Cicero 124–5, 144
 Fronto 305132
 Pliny 73n84
 Suetonius 234
- flattery 98
 Cicero to Atticus 157, 163
 Cicero to Caesar 168
 Fronto 177, 198, 205, 214
 Kingston to Henry IV 36
- Fleury, P. 89–93
- forgery 276,
- formality/informality 6, 13, 247n73, 269, 283–4
 Cicero 118–19
 Fronto 80
 Kingston letter 36
 Suetonius 241
 see also colloquial tone
- friendship, *see amicitia* (friendship)
- Fronto (Marcus Cornelius Fronto) 4, 13–14, 279–80, 305132
 biography 176–7, 196
- health 205
 borrowing/loanwords 184–90
 case usage 69–71, 7019, 74n90
 correspondents 191–5, 194120
- Appian 191–2
 Appian Apollonides 191
 Domitia Lucilla 191
 Herodes Atticus 176, 191, 208n83
 Lollianus Avitus 187–8
 Lucius Verus 3–4, 49n20, 179–80, 181, 187, 192, 193
 Marcus 100–2, 103, 180–1, 205–12
- antithetis* 185–7
 on Marcus' use of loanwords 16
- dictation and autograph 181–3
- Favorinus to 103
- functional categories 82–5, 83110, 85111, 89–93, 95116, 132, 195–205
- Gellius on 108, 305132
- Greek articles 76
- history of the letters 177–9, 206n75
- hybrid words 79, 80
- on *imperium* 227–9, 278–9
- influence of Cicero 81
- inter-and intra-sentential
 codeswitching 57, 58, 194–5, 200–2
- on language 212–19
- and orality 104, 105, 181
- parts of speech 4814, 49–54
- on Romanness 215, 218–19
- statistics 194120
- on use of Greek language 4
- functional categories 10, 19–24, 2011, 81–94, 83110, 85111, 90114, 92115, *see also* citation of Greek word under discussion; code; commentary; description; discourse marker; exclamation; explanation; Greek cultural sphere (GCS); instruction/request; insult/mockery; metalinguistic; naming; omen/prophesy; question; quotation; referential; wordplay Gaius (emperor); *see* Caligula
- Gardner-Chloros, P. 65
- Gellius, Aulus 79
 citizenship of words 226–7
 on Fronto 108, 185, 212, 216, 217, 305132
- Gelsomino, R. 234, 254
- gender 129n56, 265, 290
- geronticos* 257
- Gildenhard, I. 169

Index

- Gowers, E. 281n18, 283
 Grammar, *see* syntax and grammar
 grammatical approach code-switching 10–11
 Greek
 appropriateness of 283–5
 words in Latin script 18–19, 71–5
 Greek cultural sphere (GCS)
 (functional category) 82–9,
 83*110*, 85*111*, 92*115*, 296*125*,
 297*126*
 Cicero 126–7, 132, 133*117*,
 134–5, 144–5, 291, 294,
 295*123*
 Fronto 89, 200–5, 210, 299
 Gellius on Fronto 108, 305*132*
 Marcus 210
 Pliny 298
 Suetonius 237, 242, 301, 302*130*
 Augustus' letters 256, 266
 greeting (functional category) 83*110*,
 132, 134, 236, 291
 Griffin, M. 139
 Gumperz, J. J. 9
 Hadrian (Publius Aelius
 Hadrianus) 228–9
 Haines, C. R. 181
 Hall, J. 113
 Hamers, J. F. 596on48
 Haugen, E. 6163n57
 Henderson, J. 135, 171
 Henry IV 287
 letter from Kingston 34, 35–6
 Herodes Atticus 176, 191,
 208n83
 Hesiod 95*116*, 101–2
 Holford-Strevens, L. 79, 179
 Homer 95*116*, 102–3
 Cicero 139, 157–8
 Ad Att. 1–2, 163
 Ad Fam. 150, 167n145
 Fronto 210–11
 Marcus 102
 Pliny 19, 271–7
 Suetonius 58, 260–3, 302*130*
 Horace 255–7
 Satires 14, 280–2
 Hostilius Firminus 12
 Hout, van den, M. P. J. 149, 149n105,
 177, 178–9, 204, 207, 216
 hybrid words 11, 69, 76–80, 200–1, 250,
 252
hypothesim 188–90
 identity 278–9, 286
 Fronto on 4, 176, 213–15
 and Van Gogh 37
 see also Romanness
Iliad (Homer)
 Ad Att. (Cicero) 1–2, 163
 Ad Fam. (Cicero) 150
 Marcus 102
 Suetonius 58
 imagined quotations 202–5
imperium 3, 227–9, 278–9
in hac ΕΙΚΩΝΕ 69, 198, 200–1
 informality, *see* formality/informality
 instruction/request (functional category)
 25, 83*110*
 Cicero 147, 162–3, 164, 204, 291,
 294, 295*123*
 and Atticus 162–3, 164
 Fronto 182, 196, 299
 Pliny 274
 Suetonius 271, 301
 insult/mockery (functional category)
 2712, 83*110*, 237–8, 239, 301
 Suetonius 301
 inter-sentential switches 57–62, 62*17*, 171
 defined 44
 and literary quotations 99–100
 within word boundaries 77–80
 interference 18, 69, 74, 77–8
 intertextuality 275–6
 intimacy 3, 36, 38, 53–4, 61–2
 Cicero 129–31, 163, 172–3
 Fronto 195, 205, 211–12
 and letters from Augustus to Livia
 265n121
 Marcus 195, 205, 211–12
 intra-sentential switches 44, 57–62, 62*17*,
 129–30
 intra-word switches, *see* hybrid words
 Iulius Victor, *Ars rhetorica* 16
 Jackson, J. 43, 52
 Jonsson, C. 24n47

Index

- Julius Caesar
and Cicero 118, 165–72, 289
Fronto on 227–8
- Kaster, R. A. 226, 232
- Kingston, Richard (Dean of Windsor),
to Henry IV 34, 35–6, 287
- Laelius 289
- Lentulus 128, 149, 297/126
- letter writing 30–3
epistolarity 31–2, 285, 286
Greek treatises on 16
- lexical need (functional category) 24n48,
35, 87–8, 90/114, 197
- lingua Romana* 6, 94, 279
and Fronto 212–19
- Lipski, J. M. 42
- literary quotations (functional
category) 2–3, 44, 94–103,
284, 297/126
- Cicero 95/116, 135, 139, 163,
171–2
- Homer in 1–2, 95/116, 139, 150, 163,
167n145
- Fronto 95/116, 210–11, 299
- Marcus 102, 210
- Pliny 19, 95/116, 271–7
- Suetonius 58, 95/116, 238–9, 260–3,
301, 302/130
- Lives of the Caesars* (Suetonius) 246–9,
302/130
- Augustus 249–51, 256–7
- on the Greek of Augustus 251–5
- letters to Livia 264–8
- letters to Tiberius 257–64
- Tiberius 223–4, 225
- Lives of the Grammarians* (Suetonius)
184n26, 223, 224, 226, 227,
242
- Livia, Augustus' letters to 264–8
- loanwords, *see* borrowing
- Lollian Avitus 187–8
- love
Marcus and Fronto 206n72,
207–9
- Van Gogh 37
see also Amor (GCS)
- Lucilius 14, 280–2
- McClure, E. 42–3, 59
- McConnell, S. 127, 140, 168, 171
- Macrobius 282
- Mai, A. 178, 189
- manuscripts
Cicero's 120–5
Fronto's 178–9, 200–1
Suetonius' 232–3
- Maples, John Frederick 288–9
- Marc Antony, *see* Antonius Marcus
- Marcus Aurelius 4
case usage 74n90
correspondence with Fronto 103,
191–5, 209–10, 218
on Fronto's Greek 212–13
Meditations 187, 194–5, 205
quotations
imagined 203–5
literary 98, 100–2
relationship with Fronto 205–12
- Marius Maximus 45/13
- markedness 218–19
Cicero 119–20, 127, 143–8
Fronto 192
Suetonius 260, 267
- Matrix Language Framework (MLF)
model 10–11, 62–5, 80–1,
290
and Spanish–English texts 43
- Maturus Arrianus 11, 81
- medicine (GCS) 92/115, 266
Cicero 145, 291, 294
Fronto 299
Pliny 298
Suetonius 301, 302/130
- Meditations* (Marcus Aurelius) 187,
194–5, 205
- Menander 95/116, 98
- metalinguistic (functional category) 25,
83/110, 133/117, 291, 296/125,
297/126
- Cicero 85/111, 132, 133/117, 144, 148,
291, 294, 295/123
- Fronto 197–200, 299
- modern 90/114
- Pliny 298
- Suetonius 301, 302/130
- Augustus' letters 256
- Metamorphoses* (Apuleius) 14–15

Index

- Minicius Fundanus 74
 modern code-switching 42–3, 55–6,
 59–60, 287–90
 American fictional 54, 5516
 functional categories 85–8, 90114,
 93
monopolium 233–4
 Montes-Alcalá, C. 56, 59n45, 87–8
 morphemes 64–5
 morphological borrowing, *see*
 hybrid words
 multilingualism, literary 9
 Muysken, P. 58
 Myers-Scotton, C. 10, 81, *see also*
 Matrix Language
 Framework (MLF) model
- Naber, S. A. 181
 Naevius 211
 naming (functional category) 25, 83110,
 133117, 144–5, 291, 296125,
 297126
 Cicero 133, 294, 295123
 Fronto 299
 Pliny 298
 Suetonius 242, 301, 302130
 narrative voice, and Suetonius 241–4
 naturalism in code-switching 89–93
 negativity 10
 Nepos, on Atticus 161
 Nero (Nero Claudius Caesar), in
 Suetonius 242–4, 245–6
 nicknames 278–88
 nobility, Cicero on 156
 nonce borrowings 188–90
 Nurmi, A. 287
- obscenity, Cicero on 12, 109–10
 Observer's Paradox 190
Odyssey (Homer) 102–3
 Cicero 167n145
 Fronto 210–11
 Pliny 19
 Oksala, P. 115
 omen/prophesy (functional category)
 25, 83110
 Suetonius 301
Opicus 214
 oral quotations 2812, 47, 108, 202
 orality 17, 38, 41, 103–10, 283–4
 Fronto 104, 105, 181
 modern 56
 Suetonius 221–2, 239–41, 255
 see also colloquial tone;
 conversationality
- Osborne, R. 147
 O'Sullivan, N. 106, 153
- Pahta, P. 287
 Papirius Paetus, Cicero to 30, 109–10,
 117, 146–7, 151–2
 partial quotations 99, 150–1, 163
 parts of speech 43–56, 4513, 4814, 5115,
 5516
patria (fatherland) 14, 202, 272, 274–5,
 277, 280–3
 pederastic relationships 177, 207–8
 philosophy
 Cicero 116, 126–7, 134–5, 167–9,
 267
 Fronto 202–3
 philosophy (GCS) 127, 203, 291, 294,
 296125, 297126, 299, 301
philostorgia (φιλοστοργία) 187–8, 216
 Plato 95116, 98
Plautinotato 79
 Plautus 211
plebeio sermone, *see* colloquial tone
 Pliny 4, 14, 40, 4814, 193, 194120
 case usage 71–4
 correspondents
 Cornelianus 47
 Maturus Arrianus 11–12, 81
 Minicius Fundanus 74
 Suetonius 271–8
 Tacitus, functions of
 code-switch 19–24
 Trajan 4513, 47
 functional categories 82–5,
 83110, 85111, 95116, 132,
 236–7
 Greek articles 76
 inter- and intra-sentential switching
 58, 61–2, 6217
 parts of speech used 44–51, 4814
 Plutarch 95116, 114
 Pompey (Pompeius Magnus, Gn.), and
 Cicero 139–41, 157, 165–72

Index

- Poplack, S. 60, 61, 130
- popular (*ulgius*), in Suetonius 239–40, 244–6
- popular verse 2812, 95116, 237–40, 245–6, 301
- Suetonius 237–40, 245–6, 301
- Power, T. J. 231n28
- private and public 3, 152–3, 212
- correspondence between Augustus and Tiberius 258–9
- Fronto 183
- Pro Marcello* (Cicero) 166
- proverbs 16, 2812, 95116, 108
- Cicero 194120, 291, 294, 295123, 296125
- Fronto 202
- Pliny 298, 299
- Suetonius 238–9, 301, 305132
- Varro 216
- psycholinguistic approaches to
- code-switching 11–12
- public and private, *see* private and public
- Puerto Rican inter- and intra-sentential switching 60
- Purser, L. C. 150
- question (functional category) 25, 83110, 134, 291
- Suetonius 301
- Quintilian 23
- Quintus 58, 99, 170–2, 173–4
- quotation (functional category) 19–30, 82–9, 83110, 90114, 296125, 297126
- Cicero 85111, 132, 133117, 291, 294, 295123
- Fronto 85111, 202–5, 238–9, 299
- imagined 202–5
- Pliny 85111, 298, 301, 302130
- Suetonius, Augustus' letters 256, 257
- see also* literary quotations
- referential (functional category) 25, 83110, 133117, 201, 291, 296125, 297126
- Cicero 133, 294, 295123
- Fronto 299
- modern 85–9, 90114
- Pliny 298
- Suetonius 242, 256, 301, 302130
- register 15–17, 32, 284
- Cicero 148
- Marcus 105
- Suetonius 239–40, 241, 255
- Request, *see* instruction/request (functional category)
- research into code-switching 7–12
- Richlin, A. 207
- Rochette, B. 40, 89–93
- Rolfe, J. C. 243
- Romaine, S. 64n62
- 'Roman' language 4, 279–80, *see also* *lingua Romana*
- Romanness 5, 38, 94, 226, 290
- and Cicero 146–7
- and Fronto 215, 218–19
- Sallust 185–7
- Satires* (Varro) 216
- Schendl, H. 35–6
- Schenk, P. 274–5, 276
- Scribonius Curio, C. 289–90
- script 33
- Greek words in Latin 18–19, 71–5
- Suetonius 233–4
- script-switching, and Cicero 120–5
- Second Sophistic 231
- self-description 83110, 134, 236, 291, 296125, 297126
- self-quotation 2812, 202, 291, 298, 299
- Seneca
- Epistles*, on citizenship of words 184, 226–7
- on language 4
- Shackleton Bailey, D. R. 52, 77, 121, 149, 149n105, 150, 157, 171
- Sherwin-White, A. W. 44
- similes, Fronto 197–202
- sittybas* 124–5
- sociolinguistics 9–10, 119–20, 153–72
- solidarity (in-group) 19–23, 60–1
- Cicero 126, 130, 152
- and Puerto Rican residents of New York 60
- and Van Gogh 37
- Spanish–English texts
- functions of code-switches 85–8, 90114
- inter- and intra-sentential switching 60

Index

- and Matrix Language Frame (MLF) model 43
- parts of speech 5516
- speeches, Cicero 115–16, 166
- Suetonius (Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus)
 - 4, 13, 220–9, 268–70, 285
 - biography 230–1
 - citizenship of words 184n26
 - correspondence with Pliny 271–8
 - functional categories 82–5, 83110, 85111, 88, 92115, 236–41, 242, 301, 302130
 - Greek articles 76
 - historical context of works 230–2
 - hybrid words 78–9
 - inter- and intra-sentential switching 58
 - Lives of the Caesars* 246–9, 302130
 - Augustus 249–51, 256–7
 - on the Greek of Augustus 251–5
 - letters to Livia 264–8
 - letters to Tiberius 257–64
 - Tiberius 223–4, 225
 - Lives of the Grammarians* 184n26, 223, 224, 226, 227, 242
 - manuscript treatment 232–3
 - narrative voice 241–4
 - and orality 104, 105, 108
 - parts of speech 4814, 50–1
 - Tiberius 222–9, 233–6, 248
- Swain, S. 15, 17, 78, 94, 105–6, 115, 119–20, 121, 125–6, 129, 144, 147, 207, 218, 231
- syntax and grammar 41–3, 56–7
 - inter- and intra-sentential codeswitching 57–62, 6217
 - Matrix Language Frame (MLF) model 62–5
 - artificial forms 76–80
 - case usage 65–75
 - constraints 75–6
- Tacitus, on Tiberius 258
- tag-switching 58, 60
- Teucris* 123
- Theodorus of Gadara 95116, 198–200
- Thrasyllus 253–5
- Thucydides 95116, 98
- Tiberius
 - Suetonius 222–9, 233–6, 248, 257–64
 - Tacitus on 258
- Tiro 6818, 128, 291
- Townend, G. B. 231n28
- Trajan, correspondence with Pliny 4513, 47, 61–2, 6217, 273
- Trapp, M. 30–1, 247, 247n73
- Trebonius 128, 297126
- triggering 11, 2211
 - Fronto 199–203
 - modern 2430n48, 37, 88
- Tullia (Cicero's daughter) 136, 142–3
- Turville-Petre, T. 35
- Tyrrell, R. Y. 150
- Uniform Structure Principle 63–4
- Van Gogh, Vincent 34, 36–7
- Varro 73–4, 75, 150–1
 - Satires* 216
- Verus, Lucius 3–4, 4950n27, 179–80, 181, 187, 192, 193
- views on code-switching, ancient 12–17
- Virgil, correspondence from
 - Augustus 273–4
- Vitruvius 72n80
- Volumnius Eutrapelus 12
- Volumnius Quadratus 80, 183n25
- Wallace-Hadrill, A. 231n28, 241, 249
- Wardle, D. S. 231n28, 250, 254
- Welch, K. E. 161–2
- Wenskus, O. 74, 211, 265
- White, P. 113, 126
- Wilcox, A. 113
- Williams, C. A. 113, 157
- wit, Cicero 146–7
- Wogan-Browne, J. 36
- word-internal switches, *see* hybrid words
- wordplay (functional category) 25, 83110
 - Augustus 257
 - Cicero 12, 148–52, 291, 294, 295123
 - Fronto 299
 - Pliny 11–12
 - Suetonius 256, 259–60, 301, 302130
- Wordsworth, C. 207
- Zentella, A. C. 23

